

*B U S I R I S,*  
*KING OF EGYPT.*

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A  
*TRAGEDY.*

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*BY EDWARD YOUNG, LL. B.*

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ADAPTED FOR  
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,  
AS PERFORMED AT  
*THE THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY LANE.*

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REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,  
*By Permission of the Manager.*

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The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation ; and those  
printed in Italics are the Additions of the Theatre.

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*LONDON:*

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*Printed for, and under the Direction of,*  
GEORGE CAWTHORN, *British Library*, STRAND.

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M D C C X C V I.





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TO HIS GRACE THE  
DUKE OF NEWCASTLE,

LORD CHAMBERLAIN OF HIS MAJESTY'S HOUSHOLD, &c.

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MY LORD,

*IF a Dedication carries in its nature a mark of our acknowledgment and esteem, and is there most due, where we are most obliged, the late instances I received of your Grace's undeserved and uncommon favour in an affair of some consequence (foreign to the theatre) has taken from me the privilege of choosing a patron; especially for a performance which, not only by its kind, falls immediately under your Grace's authority, but which likewise by its good fortune in a season of some danger to it, received from your Grace's free indulgence, its life and success on the stage. Thus my ambition concurs with my duty; and it is my happiness not to be able to gratify the impulse of the one, without obeying at the same time the dictates of the other.*

*Addresses of this nature, through a gross abuse of praise, have justly fallen under ridicule. How pleasant is it to hear one of yesterday complimented on his illustrious ancestors? A sordid person, on his munificence? An illiterate pretender, on his skill in arts and sciences? Or a wretch contracted with self-love, on his diffusive benevolence to mankind? Yet from the frequency of such a shameful prostitution of the pen as this, one advantage results; it gives the grace of novelty and peculiarity to a dedication, that shall reclaim panegyric from its guilt, and rescue the late mentioned sublime distinctions of character from absurdity and injustice, by applying them to a Duke of Newcastle. It is a kind of compliment paid to panegyric itself, to use it on so just an occasion.*

*It is letters, my Lord, which distinguish one age from another; each period of time shines, or is cast in shades, as they flourish or decline; and who knows not that the fate of letters is determined by the kind or cold aspect of the great. How happy then is the present time, how fair an assurance has it of being exempted from the death of common ages, when we see the politer arts triumphing in the care and encouragement of one who has made an early and regular acquaintance with them at their own home, joining to the amplest fortune the qualifications requisite (had it been wanting) to acquire and deserve it. One, who in the flower of youth, when the imagination is warmest, and fit for such a province, presides over the labours of genius and fine taste, and has it in his power to rival those he is pleased to patronize. One, in a word, who, covetous of learning, reaches beyond his own nation for new supplies of it; who, zealous for merit, pays honours to its very ashes; and whose being an excellent master in polite letters himself, is one of the smallest proofs he has given of his ardent love towards them.*

*But I cannot turn my thought that way, without being put in mind of the imperfection of the following scenes. I own they have many faults, as many as I can allow, without reflecting on the town, for the countenance they have received: but I hope they have merit enough to entitle them to some share of your Grace's approbation, as well as errors enough to make them stand in need of all your protection. The continuance of which is humbly hoped by,*

*My Lord,*

*Your Grace's much obliged,*

*Most obedient, and*

*Most humble servant,*

*Dec. 1719.*

*EDWARD YOUNG.*

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## PROLOGUE.

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BY A FRIEND.

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*LONG* have you seen the Greek and Roman name,  
Assisted by the muse, renew their fame :  
While yet unsung those heroes sleep, from whom  
Greece form'd her Plato's, and her Cæsar's Rome,  
Such, Ægypt, were thy sons ! Divinely great  
In arts, and arms, in wisdom, and in state.  
Her early monarchs gave such glories birth,  
Their ruins are the wonders of the earth.  
Structures so vast by those great kings design'd,  
Are but faint sketches of their boundless mind :  
Yet ne'er has Albion's scene, though long renown'd,  
With the stern tyrants of the Nile been crown'd.  
The tragic muse in grandeur should excel,  
Her figure blazes, and her numbers swell.  
The proudest monarch of the proudest age,  
From Ægypt comes to tread the British stage :  
Old Homer's heroes moderns are to those  
Whom this night's venerable scenes disclose.  
Here pomp and splendor serve but to prepare ;  
To touch the soul is our peculiar care ;  
By just distress soft pity to impart,  
And mend your nature, while we move your heart :  
Nor would these scenes in empty words abound,  
Or overlay the sentiment with sound.  
Words (when the poet would your souls engage)  
Are the mere garnish of an idle stage.  
When passion rages, eloquence is mean :  
Gestures and looks best speak the moving scene.



*Ye shining fair! when tender woes invite  
To pleasing anguish, and severe delight,  
By your affliction you compute your gain,  
And rise in pleasure, as you rise in pain.  
If then just objects of concern are shewn,  
And your hearts heave with sorrows not your own,  
Let not the gen'rous impulse be withstood,  
Strive not with nature, blush not to be good:  
Sighs only from a noble temper rise,  
And 'tis your virtue swells into your eyes.*

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Dramatis Personae.

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*Men.*

BUSIRIS, King of Egypt,  
MYRON, the Prince.  
NICANOR, father of Mandane.  
MEMNON, }  
RAMESES, } Conspirators.  
SYPHOCES, }  
PHERON, }  
AULETES, a Courtier.

*Women.*

MYRIS, Queen of Egypt.  
MANDANE.

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SCENE, *Memphis*, in Old Egypt.

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Act II.

BUSIRIS.

Sc. I.



*Mr. Richardson as BUSIRIS.*

Bus. ——— *I'll stand alone  
And hurl my thunder, tho' I shake my throne.*

London. Printed for G. Cawthorn, British Library, Strand, Aug 11 1796.



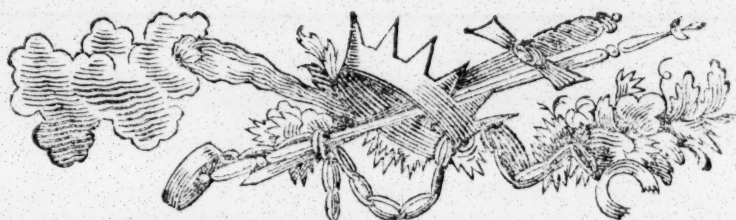
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London. Printed by C. Cawthorn, British Library Strand, Aug. 13. 1796

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## BUSIRIS.

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### ACT I. SCENE I.

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*A Temple in Memphis. PHERON and SYPHOCES enter.*

*Syphoces.*

IF glorious structures, and immortal deeds,  
Enlarge the thought, and set our souls on fire,  
My tongue has been too cold in Egypt's praise,  
The queen of nations, and the boast of times,  
Mother of science, and the house of gods!  
Scarce can I open wide my lab'ring mind  
To comprehend the vast idea, big  
With arts and arms, so boundless in their fame.

*Pher.* Thrice happy land! did not her dreadful king,  
Far-fam'd Busiris, whom the world reveres,  
Lay all his shining wonders in disgrace,  
By cruelty and pride.

*Syph.* By pride indeed:  
He calls himself the proud, and glories in it,  
Nor would exchange for Jupiter's almighty.  
Have we not seen him shake his silver reins  
O'er harness'd monarchs, to his chariot yok'd?  
In sullen majesty they stalk along,  
With eyes of indignation and despair,  
While he aloft displays his impious state,

With half their rifled kingdoms o'er his brow,  
Blazing to heav'n in diamond and gold.

*Pher.* Nor less the tyrant's cruelty than pride :  
His horrid altars stream with human blood,  
And piety is murder in his hand. [*A great shout.*]

*Syph.* There rose the voice of twice two hundred thousand,  
And broke the clouds, and clear'd the face of day ;  
The king, who from this temple's airy height,  
With heart dilated, that great work surveys,  
Which shall proclaim what can be done by man,  
Has struck his purple streamer, and descends.

*Pher.* Twice ten long years have seen that haughty pile,  
Which nations with united toil advance,  
Gain on the skies, and labour up to heaven.

*Syph.* The king—or prostrate fall, or disappear. [*Exeunt.*]

*BUSIRIS enters, attended.*

*Bus.* This ancient city, Memphis the renown'd,  
Almost coæval with the sun himself,  
And boasting strength scarce sooner to decay,  
How wanton sits she amid nature's smiles,  
Nor from her highest turret has to view,  
But golden landscapes, and luxuriant scenes,  
A waste of wealth, the storehouse of the world !  
Here, fruitful vales, far stretching, fly the sight ;  
There, sails unnumber'd whiten all the stream ;  
While from the banks full twenty thousand cities  
Survey their pride, and see their gilded towers  
Float on the waves, and break against the shore.  
To crown the whole, this rising pyramid [*Shews the plan.*]  
Lengthens in air, and ends among the stars  
While every other object shrinks beneath



Its mighty shade, and lessens to the view,  
As kings compar'd with me.

*AULETES enters, he falls prostrate.*

*Aul.* Oh, live for ever,  
Busiris, first of men!

*Bus.* Auletes, rise.

*Aul.* Ambassadors from various climes arrive,  
To view your wonders, and to greet your fame;  
Each loaden with the gifts his country yields,  
Of which the meanest rise to gold and pearl:  
The rich Arabian fills his ample vase  
With sacred incense; Ethiopia sends  
A thousand coursers fleeter than the wind,  
And their black riders darken all the plain;  
Camels and elephants from other realms,  
Bending beneath a weight of luxury,  
Bring the best seasons of their various years,  
And leave their monarchs poor.

*Bus.* What from the Persian?

*Aul.* He bends before your throne, and far outweighs  
The rest in tribute, and outshines in state.

*Bus.* Away! He sees me not; I know his purpose,  
A spy upon my greatness, and no friend:  
Take his ambassador, and shew him Egypt;  
In Memphis shew him various nations met,  
As in a sea, yet not confin'd in space,  
But streaming freely through the spacious streets,  
Which send forth millions at each brazen gate,  
When e'er the trumpet calls; high over head,  
On the broad walls, the chariots bound along,  
And leave in air a thunder of my own;  
Jove too has pour'd the Nile into my hand,

The prince of rivers, ocean's eldest son :  
Rich of myself, I make the fruitful year,  
Nor ask precarious plenty from the sky——  
Throw all my glories open to his view,  
Then tell him, in return, for trifles offer'd,  
I gave him this ; and when a Persian arm [*Gives him a bow.*  
Can thus with vigour its reluctance bend,  
And to the nerve its stubborn force subdue,  
Then let his master think of arms—but bring  
More men than yet e'er pour'd into the field ;  
Mean time, thank heaven, our tide of conquest drives  
A different way, and leaves him still a king.  
This to the Persian——I receive the rest,  
And give the world an answer. [*Exit Busiris.*

MANDANE, *attended by Priests and her Virgins, is seen sacrificing at a distance.*

*A Hymn to Isis is sung, the Priests go out.*

MANDANE, *attended by her Maids, advances.*

*Mand.* My morning duty to the gods is o'er ;  
Yet still this terror hangs upon my soul,  
And saddens every thought—I still behold  
The dreadful image, still the threatening sword  
Points at my breast, and glitters in mine eye.  
But 'twas a dream, no more. My virgins, leave me :  
And thou, great Ruler of the world, be present !  
Oh, kindly shine on this important hour !  
This hour determines all my future life,  
And gives it up to misery, or joy. [*She advances.*  
These lonely walks, this deep and solemn gloom,  
Where noon-day suns but glimmer to the view,  
This house of tears, and mansion of the dead,

For ever hides him from the hated light,  
And gives him leave to groan.

*Back Scene draws, and shews MEMNON leaning on his Father's Tomb.*

Was ever scene  
So mournful? If, my lord, the dead alone  
Be all your care, life is no more a blessing.  
How could you shun me for this dismal shade,  
And seek from love a refuge in despair?

*Mem.* Why hast thou brought those eyes to this sad place,  
Where darkness dwells, and grief would sigh secure,  
In welcome horrors, and beloved night?  
Thy beauties drive the friendly shades before them,  
And light up day e'en here. Retire, my love;  
Each joyful moment I would share with thee,  
My virtuous maid; but I would mourn alone.

*Mand.* What have you found in me so mean, to hope  
That while you sigh, my soul can be at peace?  
Your sorrows flow from your Mandane's eyes.

*Mem.* Oh, my Mandane!—

*Mand.* Wherefore turn you from me?  
Have I offended, or are you unkind?  
Ah, me! A sight as strange, as pitiful!  
From this big heart, o'ercharg'd with gen'rous sorrow,  
See the tide working upward to his eye,  
And stealing from him in large silent drops,  
Without his leave!—Can those tears flow in vain?

*Mem.* Why will you double my distress, and make  
My grief my crime, by discomposing you?  
And yet I can't forbear! Alas! my father!  
That name excuses all: what is not due.  
To that great name, which life, or death, can pay?



*Mand.* Speak on, and ease your lab'ring breast, it swells  
And sinks again, and then it swells so high,  
It looks as it would break. I know 'tis big  
With something you would utter. Oft in vain  
I have presum'd to ask your mournful story;  
But ever have been answer'd with a frown.

*Mem.* Oh, my Mandane! did my tale concern  
Myself alone, it would not lie conceal'd;  
But 'tis wrapt up in guilt, in royal guilt,  
And therefore 'tis unsafe to touch upon't.  
To tell my tale, is to blow off the ashes  
From sleeping embers which will rise in flames  
At the least breath, and spread destruction round.  
But thou art faithful, and my other self;  
And oh! my heart this moment is so full,  
It bursts with its complaints, and I must speak:—  
Myris, the present queen, was only sister  
Of great Artaxes, our late royal lord;  
Busiris, who now reigns, was first of males  
In lineal blood, to which this crown descends.  
(Not with long circumstance to load my story)  
Ambitious Myris fir'd his daring soul,  
And turn'd his sword against her brother's life:  
Then mounting to the tyrant's bed and throne,  
Enjoy'd her shame, and triumph'd in her guilt.

*Mand.* So black a story well might shun the day.

*Mem.* Artaxes! friends (a virtuous multitude)  
Were swept away by banishment, or death,  
In throngs, and sated the devouring grave.  
My father——think, Mandane, on your own,  
And pardon me!——  
The tyrant took me, then of tender years,  
And rear'd me with his son (a son since dead).

[Weeps.]

He vainly hop'd, by shews of guilty kindness  
To wear away the blackness of his crime,  
And reconcile me to my father's fate ;  
Hence have I long been forc'd to stay my vengeance,  
To smooth my brow with smiles, and curb my tongue,  
While the big woe lies throbbing at my heart.

PERON *at a distance enters.*

*Pher.* So close ! so loving ! Here I stand unseen,  
And watch my rival's fate. *[Aside,*

*Mem.* But thou, my fair,  
Thou art my peace in tumult, life in death ;  
Thou yet canst make me blest.

*Mand.* As how, my lord ?

*Mem.* Ah ! why wilt thou insult me ?

*Mand.* Memnon——

*Mem.* Speak.

*Mand.* Nature forbids ; and when I would begin,  
She stifles all my spirits, and I faint ;  
My heart is breaking, but I cannot speak.  
Oh, let me fly.——

*Mem.* You pierce me to the soul. *[Holding her.*

*Mand.* Oh ! spare me for a moment, till my heart  
Regains its wonted force, and I will speak.  
Pheron, you know, is daily urgent with me,  
Breaks through restraints, and will not be refus'd.

*[Pheron shews a great concern.*

Yet more, the prince, the young impetuous prince,  
Before his father sent him forth to war,  
And gave the Mede to his destructive sword,  
Has often taught his tongue a silken tale,  
Descended from himself, and talk'd of love.  
Since last I saw thee, his licentious passion

Has haunted all my dreams——

This day the court shines forth in all its lustre,

To welcome her returning warrior home ;——

Alas, the malice of our stars !

*Mem.* To place it

Beyond the power of fate to part our loves ;

Be this our bridal night, my life !——my soul ! [*Embrace.*

*Pber.* Perdition seize them both ! and have I lov'd

So long, to catch her in another's arms ?

Another's arms for ever ? Oh, the pang !——

Heart-piercing sight !——but rage shall take its turn——

It shall be so——and let the crime be his,

Who drives me to the black extremity :

I fear no farther hell than that I feel.

[*Exit.*

*Mem.* Trembling I grasp thee, and my anxious heart,

Is still in doubt if I may call thee mine.

Oh, bliss too great ! Oh, painful ecstasy !

I know not what to utter.

*Mand.* Ay, my lord !

What means this damp that comes athwart my joy,

Chastising thus the lightness of my heart ?

I have a father, and a father too,

Tender as nature ever fram'd.—His will

Should be consulted.—Should I touch his peace,

I should be wretched in my Memnon's arms.

*Mem.* Talk not of wretchedness.

*Mand.* Alas ! this day

First gave me birth, and (which is strange to tell)

The fates e'er since, as watching its return,

Have caught it as it flew, and mark'd it deep

With something great, extremes of good, or ill.

*Mem.* Why should we bode misfortune to our loves ?

No, I receive thee from the gods, in lieu



Of all that happiness they ravish'd from me ;  
Fame, freedom, father, all return in thee.  
Had not the gods Mandane to bestow,  
They never would have pour'd such vengeance on me ;  
They meant me thee, and could not be severe.  
Soon as night's favourable shades descend,  
The holy priest shall join our hands for ever,  
And life shall prove but one long bridal day,  
Till then, in scenes of pleasure lose thy grief ;  
Or strike the lute, or smile among the flowers,  
They'll sweeter smell, and fairer bloom for thee.  
Alas ! I'm torn from this dear tender side,  
By weighty reasons, and important calls,  
Nay, even by love itself—I quit thee now,  
But to deserve thee more. [They embrace.

*Mand.* Your friends are here. [Exit.

*Mem.* Excellent creature ! how my soul pants for thee !  
But other passions now begin their claim ;  
Doubt, and disdain, and sorrow, and revenge,  
With mingling tumult tear up all my breast :  
Oh, how unlike the softness of love !

SYPHOCES enters.

*Syph.* Hail, worthy Memnon.

*Mem.* Welcome, my Syphoces.  
And much I hope thou bring'st a bleeding heart,  
A heart that bleeds for others' miseries,  
Bravely regardless of its own, though great,  
That first of characters.

*Lyph.* And there's a second,  
Not far behind—to rescue the distress'd,  
Or die.

*Mem.* Yes, die; and visit those brave men,  
Who, from the first of time have bath'd their hands  
In tyrant's blood, and grasp'd their honest swords  
As part of their own being, when the cause,  
The public cause, demanded. Oh, my friend!  
How long shall Egypt groan in chains? How long  
Shall her sons fall in heaps without a foe?  
No war, plague, famine, nothing but Busiris,  
His people's father! and the state's defence!  
Yet but a remnant of the land survives.

*Syph.* What havock have I seen? Have we not known  
A multitude become a morning's prey,  
When troubled rest, or a debauch has sour'd  
The monster's temper? then 'tis instant death;  
Then fall the brave and good, like ripen'd corn  
Before the sweeping scythe; not the poor mercy  
'To starve and pine at leisure in their chains.  
But what fresh hope, that we receive your summons  
To meet you here this morning?

*Mem.* Know, Syphoces:  
'Twas on this day my warlike father's blood,  
So often lavish'd in his country's cause,  
And greatly sold for conquest and renown,—  
'Twas on this execrable day it flow'd  
On his own pavement, in a peaceful hour,  
Smok'd in the dust, and wash'd a ruffian's feet.  
This guilty day, returning, rouzes all  
My smother'd rage, and blows it to a flame.  
Where are our friends?

*Syph.* At hand. Rameses,  
Last night, when gentle rest o'er nature spread  
Her still command, and care alone was waking,  
Like a dumb, lonely, discontented ghost,

Enter'd my chamber, and approach'd my bed;  
With bursts of passion, and a peal of groans,  
He recollects his godlike brother's fate,  
The drunken banquet, and the midnight murder,  
And urges vengeance on the guilty prince.  
Such was the fellness of his boiling rage,  
Methought the night grew darker as he frown'd.

*Mem.* I know he bears the prince most deadly hate;  
But this will enter deeper in his soul, [Shews a letter.  
And rouze up passions, which till now have slept:  
Murder will look like innocence to this.

*Syph.* How, Memnon?

*Mem.* This reminds me of thy fate;  
The queen has courted thee with proffer'd realms,  
And sought by threats to bend thee to her will;  
She languishes, she burns, she wastes away  
In fruitless hopes, and dies upon thy name.

*Syph.* Oh, fatal love! which stung by jealousy,  
Expell'd a life far dearer than my own,  
By cursed poison—Ah, divine Apame!  
And could the murd'ress hope she should inherit  
This heart, and fill thy place within these arms?  
But grief shall yield—Revenge, I'm wholly thine.

*Mem.* The tyrant too is wanton in his age;  
He shews that all his thoughts are not in blood:  
Love claims its share; he envies poor Rameses  
The softness of his bed; and thinks Amelia  
A mistress worthy of a monarch's arms.

*Syph.* But see, Rameses comes! a sullen gloom  
Scowls on his brow, and marks him through the dusk.

RAMESES, PHERON, and other Conspirators, enter.

*Mem.* To what, my friends, shall Memnon bid you welcome?



To tombs, and melancholy scenes of death ?  
I have no costly banquets, such as spread  
Prince Myron's table, when your brother fell. [*To Rameses.*  
I have no gilded roof, no gay apartment,  
Such as the queen prepar'd for thee, Syphoces.  
Yet be not discontent, my valiant friends !  
Busiris reigns, and 'tis now out of season  
To look on ought may mind us of our fate :  
His sword is ever drawn, and furious Myris  
'Thinks the day lost that is not mark'd with blood.

*Ram.* And have we felt a tyrant twenty years,  
Felt him, as the raw wound the burning steel,  
And are we murmuring out our midnight curses,  
Drying our tears in corners, and complaining ?  
Our hands are forfeited. Gods ! strike them off.  
No hands we need to fasten our own chains,  
Our masters will do that ; and we want souls  
To raise them to an use more worthy men.

*Mem.* Ruffles your temper at offences past ?  
Here then, to sting thee into madness.

[*Gives the Letter.* Rameses reads.]

*Ram.* Oh !

*Syph.* See how the struggling passions shake his frame !

*Ram.* My bosom's joy, that crowns my happy bed  
With tender pledges of our mutual love,  
Far dearer than my soul ! and shall my wife,  
The mother of my little innocents,  
Be taken from us ? Torn from me ! from mine !  
Who live but on her sight ! and shall I hear  
Her cries for succour, and not rush upon him ?  
My infant hanging at the neck upbraids me,  
And struggles, with his little arms, to save her.  
These veins have still some gen'rous blood in store,

The dregs of those rich streams his wars have drain'd ;  
I'll giv't in dowry with her.

*Pher.* Well resolv'd :

A tardy vengeance shares the tyrant's guilt.

*Ram.* Let me embrace thee, Pheron, thou art brave,  
And dost disdain the coldness of delay.

Curse on the man that calls Rameses, friend,  
And keeps his temper at a tale like this ;  
When rage and rancour are the proper virtues,  
And loss of reason is the mark of men.

*Mem.* Thus I've determin'd : when the midnight hour  
Lulls this proud city, and her monarch dreams  
Of humbled foes, or his new mistress' love,  
Then we will rush at once, let loose the terrors  
Of rage pent in, and struggling twenty years  
To find a vent, and at one dreadful blow  
Begin and end the war.

A more auspicious juncture could not happen :  
The Persian, who for years has join'd our counsels,  
Stirr'd up the love of freedom, and in private  
Long nurs'd the glorious appetite with gold :  
This morn with transport snatch'd the wish'd occasion  
Of throwing his resentment wide, and now  
He frowns in arms, and gives the event to fate.

*Ram.* This hand shall drag the tyrant from the throne,  
And stab the royal victim on this altar. [*Pointing to the tomb.*]

*Mem.* Oh, justly thought ! Friends, cast your eyes around ;  
All that most awful is, or great in nature,  
This solemn scene presents ; the gods are here,  
And here our fam'd forefathers' sacred tombs,  
Who never brook'd a tyrant in this land.  
Let us not act beneath the grand assembly !  
The slighted altars tremble, and these tombs



Send forth a peal of groans to urge us on.  
Come then, surround my father's monument,  
And call his shade to witness to your vows.

*Ram.* Nor his alone. Oh, all ye mighty dead!  
Illustrious shades! who nightly stalk around  
The tyrant's couch, and shake his guilty soul,  
Whether already you converse with gods,  
Or stray below in melancholy glooms,  
From earth, from air, from heaven, and from hell,  
Come, I conjure you, by the pris'ner's chain,  
The widow's sighing, and the orphan's tears,  
The virgin's shrieks, the hero's spouting veins,  
By gods blasphem'd, and free-born men enslav'd!

*Mem.* Hear, Jove, and you most injur'd heroes, hear!  
While we o'er this thrice hallow'd monument  
Thus join our hands, and kneeling to the gods,  
Fast bind our souls to great revenge!

*All.* We swear——

*Mem.* This night the tyrant and his minions bleed,  
And flames shall lay those palaces in dust,  
Whose gilded dooms now glitter in the sun.

*Pher.* So now my foe is taken in the toil;  
And I've a second cast for this proud maid——  
It is an oath well spent, a perjury  
Of good account in vengeance, and in love.

[*Aside.*

*Mem.* We wrong the mighty dead, if we permit  
Our eyes alone to count this grand assembly:  
A thousand unseen heroes walk among us;  
My father rises from his tomb, his wounds  
Bleed all afresh, and consecrate the day;  
He waves his arm, and chides our tardy vengeance?  
More than this world shall thank us. Oh, my friends!  
Such our condition, we have nought to lose:



And great may be our gain, if this be great,  
To crush a tyrant, and preserve a state ;  
To still the clamours of our father's blood ;  
To fix the basis of the public good ;  
To leave a fame eternal, then to soar ;  
Mix with the gods, and bid the world adore.

---

ACT II. SCENE I.

*The Palace. A magnificent Throne discovered, and several Courtiers walking to and fro. SYPHOCES and RAMESES enter. Shouts at a distance.*

*Rameses.*

WHAT means this dust and tumult in the court,  
These streamers fooling in the wind, these shouts,  
The tyrant blazing in full insolence,  
And all his gaudy courtiers basking round him,  
Like pois'nous vermin in a dog-day sun ?

*Syph.* Your father and Prince Myron are arriv'd,  
And with one peal of joy the nation rings.

*Ram.* Long has my father serv'd this tyrant king,  
With zeal well worthy of a better cause :  
Though with his helm he hides a hoary brow,  
Long vers'd in death, the father of the field,  
At the shrill trumpet he throws off the weight  
Of fourscore years, and springs upon the foe.  
The transport danger gives him, conquers nature,  
And a short youth boils up within his veins.

*Syph.* Behold, this way they pass to meet the king.

MYRON and NICANOR *pass the Stage with Attendants.*

Ram. What pity 'tis that one so lost in guilt,  
Should thus engage the sight with manly charms,  
And make vice lovely ! [ *Looking on Myron.* ]

Syph. Pardon me, Rameses :  
Though to my foe, I must be ever just.  
He's gen'rous, grateful, affable, and brave ;  
But then he knows no limit to his passion :  
The tempest-beaten bark is not so toss'd  
As is his reason, when those winds arise ;  
And though he draws a fatal sword in battle,  
And kindles in the warm pursuit of fame,  
Pleasure subdues him quite, the sparkling eye,  
And gen'rous bowl bear down his graver mind,  
While fiery spirits dance along his veins,  
And keep a constant revel in his heart.

Ram. But here the tyrant comes !—With what excess  
Of idle pride will he receive his son !  
How with big words will he swell out this conquest,  
And into grandeur puff his little tales !

BUSIRIS *enters, and ascends the Throne ; on the other side,*  
MYRON and NICANOR *enter.*

Bus. Welcome, my son, greater partner of my fame !  
I thank thee for the increase of my dominions,  
That now more mountains rise, more rivers flow,  
And more stars shine in my still growing empire.  
The sun himself surveys it not at once,  
But travels for the view, whilst far disjoin'd  
My subjects live unheard of by each other ;  
These wrapp'd in shades, while those enjoy the light ;  
Their day is various, but their king the same

*Myr.* Here, sir, you thanks are due ; to this old arm,  
Whose nerves not threescore winter camps unbend,  
You owe your victory, and I my life.  
When my fierce courser, with a javlin stung,  
First rear'd in air, then tearing with a bound  
The trembling earth, plung'd deep amidst the foe ;  
And now a thousand deaths from ev'ry side,  
Had but one mark, and on my buckler rung ;  
Through the throng'd legions, like a tempest, rush'd  
This friend, o'er-gasping heroes, rolling steeds,  
And snatch'd me from my fate.

*Bus.* I thank thee, general ;  
Thou hast a heart that swells with loyalty,  
And throws off the infection of these times :  
But thy degenerate boy——

*Nic.* No more my son,  
I cut him off ; my guilt, my punishment.  
Look not, dread sir, on me through his offence ;  
Oh, let not that discolour all my service,  
And ruin those who blame him for his crime.

*Bus.* Old man, I will not wear the crown in vain :  
Subjects shall work my will, or feel my pow'r.  
Their disobedience shall not be my guilt.  
Who is their welfare, glory, and defence ?  
The land that yields them food, and ev'ry stream  
That slakes their thirst, the air they breathe is mine,  
And is concurrence to their own enjoyment,  
By due submission—a too great return ?  
Death and destruction are within my call——  
But thou shalt flourish in thy master's smile.  
A faithful minister adorns my crown,  
And throws a brighter glory round my brow.

*Nic.* Take but one more, one small one to your favour,



And then my soul's at peace—I have a daughter,  
An only daughter, now an only child,  
Since her lost brother's folly ; she deserves  
The most a father can for so much goodness :  
Her mother's dead, and we are left alone,  
We two are the whole house, nor are we two,  
In her I live, the comfort of my age ;  
And if the king extend his grace so far,  
And take that tender blossom into shelter,  
Then I have all my monarch can bestow,  
Or heav'n itself ; but this, that I may wear  
My life's poor remnant out in your command :  
Stretch forth my being to the last in duty,  
And when the fates shall summon, die for you.

*Bus.* Nicanor, know thy daughter is our care.

*Myr.* Oh, sir, be greatly kind, exert your pow'r,  
And with the monarch furnish out the friend !——  
Art thou not he, that gallant-minded chief [To Nic.  
Who would not stoop to give me less than life ?  
And shall I prove ungrateful ? Shocking thought !  
He that's ungrateful, has no guilt but one ;  
All other crimes may pass for virtues in him.

*Nic.* What joy my daughter's promis'd welfare gives me,  
My lips I need not open to discover——  
Thus humbly let me thank you.

*Bus.* Dry thy tears,  
And follow us ; thy daughter's near our queen,  
And longs, no doubt, to see thee ; bless the maid,  
And then attend us on affairs of state.  
I hear there's treason near us : though the slaves  
Fall off from their disobedience, and deny  
That I'm their monarch—I'm Busiris still,  
Collected in myself, I'll stand alone,

And hurl my thunder, though I shake my throne :  
 Like death, a solitary king I'll reign  
 O'er silent subjects, and a desert plain ;  
 Ere brook their pride, I'll spread a gen'ral doom,  
 And ev'ry step shall be, from tomb to tomb. [Exit.

[Myr. and Aul. *who talked aside, advance.*

*Myr.* Her absent beauties glow'd upon my mind,  
 And sparkled in each thought. She never left me——  
 Would'st thou believe it ? In the field of battle,  
 In the mid terror, and the flame of fight,  
 Mandane thou hast stol'n away my soul,  
 And left my fame in danger—my rais'd arm,  
 Has hung in air, forgetful to descend,  
 And for a moment spar'd the prostrate foe——  
 Oh, that her birth rose equal to my own !  
 Then I might wed with honour, and enjoy  
 A lawful bliss——and why not now ? Methinks  
 Absence has plac'd her in a fairer light,  
 Enrich'd the maid, and heighten'd ev'ry charm.

*Aul.* She comes.

*Myr.* That modest grace subdu'd my soul.  
 That chastity of look, which seems to hang  
 A veil of purest light o'er all her beauties,  
 And by forbidding most inflames desire.

MANDANE *enters.*

What tender force ! What dignity divine !  
 What virtue consecrating ev'ry feature !  
 Around that neck, what dross are gold and pearl !  
 Mandane ! Powerful being, whose first sight  
 Gives me a transport, not to be express'd ;  
 And with one moment over-pays a year  
 Of danger, toil, and death, and absence from thee.

*Mand.* My Lord, I sought my father.

*Myr.* Leave me not,

I've much to say, much more than you conceive ;

Yes, by the gods, much more than I can utter.

My breath is snatch'd, I tremble, I expire : [ *Aside.*

Nay, here I'll offer tender violence— [ *Takes her hand.*

May I not breathe my soul upon this hand,

When your eyes triumph, and insult my pain !

Permit me here to take a small revenge.

*Mand.* My lord, I am not conscious of my fault.

*Myr.* 'Tis false—I know the language of those eyes,

They use me ill—see my heart beat, Mandane ;

Believe not me, but tell yourself my passion—

Is it in art to counterfeit within ?

To drive the spirits, and inflame the blood ?

Each nerve is pierc'd with light'ning from your eye,

And every pulse is in the throbs of love.

*Mand.* My Lord, my duty calls ; I must not stay.

*Myr.* Give me a moment : I have that to speak  
Will burst me if suppress—O, heav'nly maid :

Thy charms are doubled, so is thy disdain—

Who is it ! Tell me who enjoys thy smile ?

There is a happy man, I swear there is !

I know it by your coldness to your friend—

That thought has fix'd a scorpion on my heart,

That stings to death—and is it possible

You ever spoke of Myron in his absence,

Or cast, at leisure, a light thought that way ?

*Mand.* I thought of you, my lord, and of my father,

And pray'd for your success ; nor must I now

Neglect to give him joy.

*Myr.* Yet stay, you shall not go—Ungrateful woman !

I would not wrong your father ; but, by heaven,



His love is hatred if compar'd with mine.  
 I understand whence this unkindness flows :  
 Your heart resents some licence of my youth,  
 When love had touch'd my brain. You may forgive me,  
 Because I never shall forgive myself ;  
 But that you live, I'd rush upon my sword.  
 If you forgive me, I shall now approach,  
 Not as a lover only, but a wretch  
 Redeem'd from baseness to the ways of honour,  
 And to my passion join my gratitude.  
 Each time I kneel before you, I shall rise  
 As well a better, as a happier man,  
 Indebted to your virtue and your love.

*Mand.* I must not hear you.

*Myr.* Oh, torment me not !

Hear me you must, and more—Your father's valour,  
 In the late battle, rescu'd me from death ;  
 And how shall I be grateful ? Thou'rt a princess——  
 Think not, Mandane, this a sudden start,  
 A flash of love, that kindles and expires :  
 Long have I weigh'd it ; since I parted hence,  
 No night has pass'd but this has broke my rest,  
 And mix'd with ev'ry dream. My fair, I wed thee  
 In the maturest counsel of my soul.

*Mand.* Oh, gods, I tremble at the rising storm !  
 Where can this end ?

[ *Aside.*

*Myr.* And do you then despise me ?

*Mand.* My lord, I want the courage to accept  
 What far transcends my merit, and for ever  
 Must silently upbraid my little worth.

*Myr.* Have I forsook myself, foregone my temper,  
 Headlong to all the gay delights of youth,  
 And fall'n in love with virtue most severe ?

Turn'd superstitious to make thee my friend?  
Gods! have I struggled through the pow'rful reasons  
That strongly combated my fond resolves?  
Was wealth o'erlook'd, and glory of no weight,  
My parent's crown forgot, and my own conquests,  
And all to be refus'd; to sooth your pride,  
And make my rival sport?

*Mand.* With patience hear me:

[*Kneels.*

Nor let my trust in Myron prove my ruin.

*Myr.* Distraction! Art thou marry'd?

*Mand.* Oh!

*Myr.* My heart foretold it—Ah, my soul! Auletes—

[*Swoons.*

*Aul.* Madam, 'tis prudent in you to withdraw.

[*Exit Mandane.*

*Myr.* I do not live—I cannot bear the light!  
Where is Mandane? But I would not know:  
She is not mine. Yet though not mine in love,—  
Revenge, my just revenge, may overtake her.  
Oh, how I hate her! Let me know her faults.  
Did the proud maid insult me in distress,  
And smile to see me gasping? Speak, Auletes,  
Did she not sigh? Sure she might pity me,  
Though all her love is now another's right.

*Aul.* She sigh'd and wept; but I remov'd her from you.

*Myr.* It was well done. Yet I could gaze for ever:  
And did she sigh, and did she drop a tear?  
The tears she shed for me are surely mine;  
And shall another dry them on those cheeks,  
And make them an excuse for greater fondness?  
Shall I assist the villain in his joys?  
No, I will tear her from him.  
I'd grudge her beauties to the gods that gave them.

*Aul.* My lord, have temper.

*Myr.* And another's passion  
Warm on that lip! another's burning arms  
Strain'd round the lovely waist, for which I die;  
And she consenting, wooing, growing to him!  
What golden scenes, when absent, did I feign!  
What lovely pictures did I draw in air!  
What luxury of thought! and see my fate!  
Shall then my slave enjoy her, and I languish  
In my triumphal car, my foot on purple,  
And o'er my head a canopy of gold;  
Fate in my nod, and monarchs in my train?  
What if I stab him? No; she will not wed  
His murderer. I never form'd a wish,  
But full fruition taught me to forget it.  
And I am lessen'd by my late success?  
And have I lost my conquest? Fly, Auletes,  
And tell her——

*Aul.* What, my lord?

*Myr.* No; bid her——

*Aul.* Speak.

*Myr.* I know not what. My heart is torn asunder.

*Aul.* Retire, my lord, and re-compose yourself:  
The queen approaches. Ha! her bosom swells;

[Exit Myron.

Her pale lip trembles a; disorder'd haste  
Is in her step; her eyes shot gloomy fires!  
When Myris is in anger, happy they  
She calls her friends.

QUEEN enters.

*Queen.* Auletes, where's the King?

*Aul.* At council, Madam.



*Queen.* Let him know I want him.  
Base! to forget to whom he owes a crown!  
Fool! to provoke her rage whose hand is red  
In her own brother's blood!

[*Exit Aul.*

*BUSIRIS and PHERON enter.*

*Bus.* Horrid conspiracy!

*Pher.* This night was destin'd for the bloody deed.

*Bus.* Mistaken villains! if they wish my death,  
They should, in prudence, lay their weapons by,  
So jealous are the gods of Egypt's glory;  
I cannot die while slaves are arm'd against me.  
Haste, Pheron, to the dungeon, plunge them down  
Far from the hopes of day; there let them lie  
Banish'd this world, while yet alive, and groan  
In darkness and in horror; let double chains  
Consume the flesh of Memnon's loaded limbs,  
Till death shall knock them off. A king's thy friend;  
Nay, more—Busiris. Go, let that suffice. [Exit Pher.

*Queen.* My lord, your thought's engag'd.

*Bus.* Affairs of state  
Detain'd me from my queen.

*Queen.* The world may wait:  
I've a request, my lord.

*Bus.* Oblige me with it.

*Queen.* Will you comply?

*Bus.* My queen, my power is yours.

*Queen.* Your queen?

*Bus.* My queen.

*Queen.* Indeed, it should be so.  
Then sign these orders for Amelia's death.  
He starts, turns pale, he's sinking into earth!  
Enough; begone, and fling thee at her feet;

Doat on my slave, and sue to her for mercy.  
 Go, pour forth all the folly of thy soul;  
 But bear in mind, thou giv'st not of thy own:  
 Thou giv'st that kindness which I bought with blood,  
 Nor shall I lose unmov'd.

*Bus.* I wish, my queen,  
 This still had slept a secret for thy sake:  
 But since thy restless jealousy of soul  
 Has been so studious of its own disquiet,  
 Support it as you may. I own I've felt  
 Amelia's charms, and think them worth my love.

*Queen.* And dar'st thou bravely own it too? Oh, insult!  
 Forgetful man! 'tis I then owe a crown!  
 Thou hadst still grovell'd in the lower world,  
 And view'd a throne at distance, had not I  
 Told thee thou wert a man, and (dreadful thought!)  
 Through my own brother cut thy way to empire:  
 But thou might'st well forget a crown bestow'd;  
 That gift was small; I listen'd to thy sighs,  
 And rais'd thee to my bed.

*Bus.* I thank you for it.  
 The gifts you made me were not cast away:  
 I understand their worth. Husband and king  
 Are names of no mean import; they rise high  
 Into dominion, and are big with pow'r.—  
 Whate'er I was, I now am King of Egypt,  
 And Myris' Lord.

*Queen.* I dream! Art thou Busiris?  
 Busiris, that has trembled at my feet,  
 And art thou now my Jove with clouded brow,  
 Dispensing fate, and looking down on Myris?  
 Dost thou derive thy spirit from thy crimes?  
 'Cause thou hast wrong'd me, therefore dost thou threaten,

And roll thine eye in anger? Rather bend,  
And sue for pardon. Oh, detestable!  
Burn for a stranger's bed!—

*Bus.* And what was mine,  
When Myris first vouchsaf'd to smile on me?

*Queen.* Distraction! death! upbraided for my love!  
Thou art not only criminal, but base.  
Mine was a godlike guilt; ambition in it:  
Its foot in hell, its head above the clouds;  
For know, I hated when I most caress'd:  
'Twas not Busiris, but the crown, that charm'd me,  
And sent its sparkling glories to my heart.  
But thou canst soil thy diadem with slaves.

*Bus.* Syphoces is a king then.

*Queen.* Ha!

*Bus.* Let fair Amelia know the King attends her. [*Exit.*

*Queen.* Go, tyrant, go; and wisely, by thy shame,  
Prepare thy way to ruin: I'll o'ertake thee,  
Living, or dead; if dead, my ghost shall rise,  
Shriek in thy ears, and stalk before thy eyes;  
In death I'll triumph o'er my rival's charms,  
And chill thy blood, when clasp'd within her arms.  
Alone to suffer is beneath the great;  
Tyrant, thy torments shall support my state. [*Exit.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

*The General's House. BUSIRIS enters.*

*Busiris.*

HERE dwells my stubborn fair: I'll sooth her pride,  
And lay an humbled monarch at her feet.  
But let her well consider, if she's slow



To welcome bliss, and dead to glory's charms,  
 Then my resentment rises in proportion  
 To this high grace extended to my slave,  
 And turns the force of her own charms against her.  
 Monarchs may court, but cannot be deny'd.

*The QUEEN enters, veiled.*

Amelia, dry thy tears, and lay aside  
 That melancholy veil—Ha, Myris!

*Queen.* Myris—

A name that should like thunder strike thine ear,  
 And make thee tremble in this guilty place.  
 But wherefore dost thou think I meet thee here?  
 Not with mean sighs and deprecating tears  
 To humble me before thee, and increase  
 The number of thy slaves, in hope to break  
 Thy resolution, and avert thy crime!  
 But to denounce, if thou shalt dare persist,  
 The vengeance due to injur'd heav'n and me;  
 And by this warning, double thy offence.  
 Think, think of vengeance, 'tis the only joy  
 Which thou hast left me! I'm no more thy wife,  
 Nor queen; but know, I am a woman still.

*AULETES enters.*

*Aul.* May all the gods watch o'er your life and empire,  
 And render omen's vain! So fierce the storm,  
 Old Memphis from her deep foundations shakes;  
 And such unheard of prodigies hang o'er us,  
 As make the boldest tremble. See, the moon,  
 Robb'd of her light, discolour'd, without form,  
 Appears a bloody sign, hung out by Jove,  
 To speak peace broken by the sons of men;

The Nile, as frightened, shrinks within its banks ;  
 And as this hour I pass'd great Isis' temple,  
 A sudden flood of lightning rush'd upon it,  
 And laid the shrine in ashes.

*Bus.* Oh, mighty Isis !

Why all these signs in nature ? Why this tumult  
 To tell me I am guilty ? If my crown  
 The fates demand, why let them take it back.  
 My crown, indeed, I may resign ; but, oh !  
 Who can awake the dead ?——  
 'Tis hence these spectres shock my midnight thoughts,  
 And nature's laws are broke to discompose me ;  
 'Tis I that whirl these hurricanes in air,  
 And shake the earth's foundations with my guilt.  
 Oh, Myris, give me back my innocence !

*Queen.* I bought it with an empire.

*Bus.* Cheaply sold !

Why didst thou urge my lifted arm to strike  
 The pious king, when my own heart recoil'd ?

*Queen.* Why did you yield when urg'd, and by a woman ?  
 You that are vain of your superior reason,  
 And swell with the prerogative of man :  
 If you succeed, our counsel is of nought,  
 You own it, not accepted, though enjoy'd ;  
 But steal the glory, and deny the favour :  
 Yet if a fatal consequence attend,  
 Then we're the authors ; then your treach'rous praise,  
 Allows us sense enough to be condemn'd.

*Bus.* 'Tis prudent to dissemble with her fury,  
 And wait a softer season for my love.  
 Bid Isis' priests attend their King's devotions :  
 I'll sooth with sacrifice the angry pow'rs.  
 Swift to my dungeons ; bid their darksome wombs

[*Aside.*



Give up the numerous captives of my wars ;  
Ten thousand lives to heav'n devoutly pour,  
Nor let the sacred knife grow cool from blood,  
Till sevenfold Nile, infected with the stain,  
In all his streams flows purple to the main.

[*Exit.*

*Queen.* Thin artifice! I know the sacrifice  
You most intend. But I will dash your joys :  
Thou, victim, and thy goddess, both shall feel me.

*Aul.* Madam, the Prince.

*Queen.* And is he still afflicted?

*Aul.* It grieves your faithful servant to relate it ;  
He struggles manfully, but all in vain :  
Sometimes he calls his music to his aid,  
He strives with martial strains to fire his blood,  
And rouse his soul to battle ;  
Then he relapses into love again,  
Feeds the disease, and doats upon his ruin.

*Queen.* Why seeks he here the cause of all his sorrows?

*Aul.* He seeks not here Mandane, but her father ;  
For friendship is the balm of all our cares,  
Melts in the wound, and softens ev'ry fate. [*Martial musick.*

MYRON enters at a distance.

*Queen.* Heav'ns, what a glory blazes from his eye !  
What force, what majesty in ev'ry motion !  
As at each step he trod upon a foe !

*Myr.* Oh, that this ardor would for ever last !  
It shall ; nor will I curse my being more :  
Chain'd kings, and conquer'd kingdoms are before me ;  
I'll bend the bow, and launch the whistling spear,  
Bound o'er the mountains, plunge into the stream,  
Where thickest faulchions gleam, and helmets blaze,  
Rush in, and find amusement from my pain.



I'll number my own heart among my foes,  
And conquer it, or die.

[Exit.

*Queen.* The thoughts of war  
Will soon dislodge the fair-one from his breast.  
But this has broken in on my intent——  
I would remind thee of my late commands.

*Aul.* Madam, 'tis needless to remind your slave :  
At dead of night I set the pris'ners free.

*Queen.* Yes, set the pris'ners free ; 'tis great revenge,  
Such as my soul pants after——It becomes me.  
Oh, it will gall the tyrant ! stab him home !  
And if one spark of gratitude survives,  
Soften Syphoces to my fond desire :  
The tyrant's torment is my only joy.  
Ye gods ! or let me perish, or destroy,  
Or rather both : for what has life to boast,  
When vice is tasteless grown, and virtue lost ?  
Glory and wealth I call upon in vain,  
Nor wealth, nor glory, can appease my pain ;  
My every joy upbraids me with my guilt,  
And triumphs tell me sacred blood is spilt. [Exit Queen.

MYRON enters.

*Myr.* The shining images of war are fled,  
The fainting trumpets languish in mine ear,  
The banners furl'd, and all the sprightly blaze,  
Or burnish'd armour, like the setting sun,  
Insensibly is vanish'd from my thought ;  
No battle, siege, or storm, sustain my soul  
In wonted grandeur, and fill out my breast ;  
But softness steals upon me, melting down  
My rugged heart in languishment and sighs,  
And pours it out at my Mandane's feet.

I see her e'en this moment stand before me,  
Too fair for sight, and fatal to behold.  
I have her here, I clasp her in my arms,  
And in the madness of excessive love,  
Sigh out my heart, and bleed with tenderness.

*Aul.* My lord, too much you cherish this delusion :  
She's another's.

*Myr.* Do not tell me so.  
Say rather she's dead ; each heav'nly charm  
Turn'd into horror ! Oh, the pain of pains  
Is when the fair-one, whom our soul is fond of,  
Gives transport, and receives it from another !  
How does my soul burn up with strong desire ;  
Now shrink into itself ; now blaze again !  
I'll tear and rend the strings that tie me to her :  
If I stay longer here, I'm undone.

*As he is going, NICANOR enters.*

*Nic.* My Prince, (and since such honours you vouchsafe)  
My friend, I have presum'd upon your favour :  
This is my daughter's birth-day, and this night  
I dedicate to joys which ever languish,  
If you refuse to crown them with your presence.

*Myr.* Nicanor, I was warm on other thoughts——

*Nic.* I am still near you in the day of danger,  
In toilsome marches, and the bloody field,  
When nations against nations clash in arms,  
And half a people in one groan expire :  
Why am I, with your helmet, thrown aside,  
Cast off, and useless in the hour of peace ?

*Myr.* Since then you press it, I must be your guest !——  
Methinks I labour, as I onward move,  
As under check of some controuling pow'r.

[ *Aside.*

What can this mean? wine may relieve my thoughts,  
And mirth, and converse, lift my soul again. [Exeunt.

*The back Scene draws up and discovers a Banquet.*

MANDANE enters, richly drest.

*Mand.* It was this day that gave me life; this day  
Should give me much more, should give me Memnon too:  
But I am rival'd by his chains, they clasp  
The hero round, (a cold, unkind embrace!)  
And but an earnest of far worse to come.  
While he, my soul, in dungeon darkness clos'd,  
Breathes damp unwholesome steams, and lives on poison,  
I am compell'd to suffer ornaments,  
To wear the rainbow, and to blaze in gems,  
To put on the shining guilt of dress,  
When 'tis almost a crime that I still live.  
These eyes which can't dissemble, pouring forth  
The dreadful truth, are honest to my heart.  
These robes, Oh, Memnon! are Mandane's chains,  
And load, and gall, and wring her bleeding heart.  
[Exit Mandane.

MYRON, NICANOR, AULETES, enter, &c. *They take their places.*

*Nic.* Sound louder, sound, and waft my wish to heaven.  
Hear me, ye righteous gods, and grant my pray'r:  
For ever shine propitious on my daughter;  
Protect her, prosper her, and when I'm dead  
Still bless me in Mandane's happiness.

[The bowl goes round. Musick.

Haste, call my daughter; none can taste of joy,



Till she, the mistress of the feast, is with us.

[*A servant brings Nicanor a letter ; he reads it.*

The king's commands at any hour are welcome.

*Myr.* Not leave us, General!

*Nic.* Ha! the king here writes me:

The discontented populace, that held  
O'er midnight bowls their desperate cabals,  
Are now in bold defiance to his power.

Amid the terrors of this stormy night,  
Ev'n now, they deluge all yon western vale,  
And form a war, impatient for the day.

The spreading poison too has caught his troops,  
And the revolting soldiers stand in arms,  
Mix'd with seditious citizens.

*Myr.* Your call is great.

MANDANE enters. MYRON starts from his seat in disorder.

*Mand.* Oh, Memnon! how shall I become a banquet,  
Suppress my sorrow, and comply with joy?  
Severest fate! am I deny'd to grieve? [Aside.

*Nic.* Be comforted, my child, I'll soon return.  
Why dost thou make me blush? I feel my tears  
Run trickling down my cheek.

*Myr.* I must away:  
Her smiles were dreadful, but her tears are death.  
I can no more. I sink beneath her charms,  
And feel a deadly sickness at my heart. [Aside to Auletes.

*Nic.* Your cheek is pale, I dare not let you part.  
You are not well.

*Myr.* A small indisposition;  
I soon shall throw it from me. Farewell, General;  
Conquest attend your arms.

*Nic.* You shall not leave  
Your servant's roof; 'tis an unwholesome air,  
And my apartment wants a guest.

*Myr.* Nicanor,  
If health returns, I shall not press my couch,  
And hear of distant conquests: but o'ertake thee,  
And add new terror to the front of war.

*Nic.* Mean time, you are a guardian to my child;  
Let her not miss a father in my absence:  
She's all my soul holds dear.

*Both.* Farewell. Farewell. [Embrace.

[Nicanor waits on Myron off the Stage, and returns.

*Nic.* My child, I feel a tenderness at heart  
I never felt before. Come near, Mandane;  
Let me gaze on thee, and indulge the father:  
Thy dying mother with her clay-cold hand  
Press'd mine, then turning on thee her faint eye,  
Let fall a tear of fondness, and expir'd.  
I cannot love thee well enough; her grace  
Softens thy cheek, and lives within thine eye.  
Let me embrace you both—My heart o'erflows——  
If I should fall——thy mother's monument——  
But I shall kill thy tenderness——No more——  
Nay, do not weep, I shall return again,  
And with my dearest child sit down in peace,  
And long enjoy her goodness.

*Mand.* If the gods  
Regard your daughter's fervent vows, you will.

*Nic.* Farewell, my only care; my soul is with thee:  
Regard yourself, and you remember me. [Exit.

MYRON and AULETES enter.

*Myr.* No place can give me ease; my restless thought,  
Like working billows in a troubled sea,

Tosses me to and fro, nor know I whither.  
 What am I, who, or where? Ha! where indeed!  
 But let me pause, and ask myself again  
 If I am well awake——Impetuous bliss!  
 My heart leaps up, my mounting spirits blaze!  
 My soul is in a tempest of delight!

*Aul.* My Lord, you tremble, and your eyes betray  
 Strange tumults in your breast.

*Myr.* What hour of night?

*Aul.* My Lord, the night's far spent.

*Myr.* The gates are barr'd,  
 And all the household is compos'd to rest?

*Aul.* All; and the great Nicanor's own apartment,  
 Proud to receive a royal guest, expects you.

*Myr.* Perdition on thy soul for naming him!  
 Nicanor! Oh, I never shall sleep more!  
 Defend me! Whither wander'd my bold thoughts!  
 Broke loose from reason, how did they run mad!  
 And now they are come home, all arm'd with stings,  
 And pierce my bleeding heart——  
 I beg the gods to disappoint my crime,  
 Yet almost wish them deaf to my desire:  
 I long, repent; repent, and long again;  
 And every moment differs from the last.  
 I must no longer parley with destruction.  
 Auletes, seize me, force me to my chamber,  
 There chain me down, and guard me from myself:  
 Hell rises in each thought; 'tis time to fly.

[*Exeunt.*]

MANDANE and RAMESES enter.

*Ram.* I hope your fears have giv'n a false alarm.

*Mand.* You've heard my frequent visions of the night,  
 You know my father's absence, Myron's passion;



Just now I met him: at my sight he started,  
Then with such ardent eyes he wander'd o'er me,  
And gaz'd with such malignity of love,  
Sending his soul out to me in a look  
So fiercely kind, I trembled, and retir'd.

*Ram.* No more; my friends (which as I have inform'd you,  
The Queen, to gall the tyrant, has set free)  
Are lodg'd within your call; th' appointed signal,  
If danger threatens, brings them to your rescue.

*Mand.* Where are they?

*Ram.* In the hall beneath your chamber.  
Memnon alone is wanting; he's providing  
For your escape before the morning dawn.  
The rest in visors, fearing to be known,  
Have ventur'd through the streets for your protection.

*Mand.* Auspicious turn! then I again am happy.

*Ram.* Auspicious turn indeed! and what completes  
The happiness, the base man that betray'd us,  
'This arm laid low: I watch'd him from the King;  
I took him warm, while he with lifted brow,  
Confess'd high thought, and triumph'd in his mien;  
I thank'd him with my dagger in his heart.  
'Tis late; refresh yourself with sleep, Mandane.

[*Exit* Mandane.]

So, 'tis resolv'd, if Myron dares attempt  
So black a crime, it justifies the blow:  
He dies, and my poor brother's ghost shall smile.  
This way he bends his steps; I hate his sight,  
And shall 'till death has made it lovely to me.

[*Exit.*

MYRON and AULETES enter.

*Myr.* Oh, how this passion, like a whirlpool, drives me,  
With giddy, rapid motion, round and round,

I know not where, and draws in all my soul!  
 I reason much, but reason about her;  
 And where she is, all reason dies before her;  
 And arguments but tell me I am conquer'd.—  
 So black the night, as if no star e'er shone  
 In all the wild expanse; the lightning's flash  
 But shews the darkness, and the bursting clouds  
 With peals of thunder seem to rock the land.  
 Not beasts of prey dare now from shelter roam,  
 But howl in dens, and make the forests groan.  
 What then am I? A monster yet more fell  
 Than haunts the wilds?—I am, and threaten more—  
 My breast is darker than this dreadful night,  
 And feels a fiercer tempest rage within—  
 I must—I will—This leads me to her chamber—  
 Did not the raven croak? [Starting.]

*Aul.* I hear her not.

*Myr.* By Heav'n, methink earth trembles under me!  
 Awake, ye furies, you are wanting to me;  
 Oh, finish me in ill! Oh, take me whole!  
 Or, gods, confirm me good without allay,  
 Nor leave me thus at variance with myself!  
 Let me not thus be dash'd from side to side—  
 The old man wept at parting, kneel'd before me,  
 Confided in me, gave her to my care,  
 Nor long since sav'd my life—and doubt I still?  
 I'm guilty of the fact; here let me lie,  
 And rather groan for ever in the dust,  
 And float the marble pavement with my tears,  
 Than rise into a monster. [Flings himself down.]

*Mandane passing at a distance, speaks to a Servant.*

*Mand.* Well, observe me.  
 Before the rising sun my Lord arrives,

To seal our vows ; the holy priest is with him.  
 Watch to receive them at the western gate,  
 And privately conduct them to my chamber.

[*Excunt Mandane and Servant.*]

*Myr.* [*Starting up.*] Oh, torments, racks, and flames ! then  
 she expects him

With open arms ! Am I cast out for ever,  
 For ever must despair, unless I snatch  
 The present moment ? She is all prepar'd,  
 Her wishes waking, and her heart on fire !  
 That pow'rful thought sweeps heav'n and hell before it,  
 And lays all open to the Prince of Egypt,  
 Born to enjoy whatever he desires,  
 And fling fear, anguish, and remorse behind him.  
 I see her midnight dress, her flowing hair,  
 Her slacken'd bosom, her relenting mien ;  
 All the forbidden forms of day flung off  
 For yielding softness——Oh, I'm all confusion !  
 I shiver in each joint !——Ah, she was made  
 To justify the blackest crimes, and gild  
 Ruin and death with her destructive charms !

*Aul.* You'll force her then ?

*Myr.* Thou villain, but to think it——  
 No, I'll solicit her with all my pow'r ;  
 Conquest and crowns shall sparkle in her sight.  
 If she consent, thy Prince is bless'd indeed,  
 Takes wing, and tow'rs above mortality !  
 If she resist, I put an end to pain,  
 And lay my breathless body at her feet.

MANDANE *passing at a distance to her Chamber ; MYRON*  
*meets her.*

*Mand.* Is this well done, my Lord ?



*Myr.* Condemn me not  
 Before you hear me : let this posture tell you,  
 I'm not so guilty as perhaps your fears,  
 Your commendable, modest fears suspect.  
 Nay, do not go, you know not what to do :  
 I would receive a favour, not constrain it.  
 Return, or good Nicanor, best of fathers,  
 Shall charge you with the murder of his friend.

*Mand.* And dare you then pronounce that sacred name,  
 And yet persist ? Were you his mortal foe,  
 What could your malice more ?

*Myr.* Oh, fair Mandane !  
 I know my fault, I know your virtue too ;  
 But such the violence of my disorder,  
 That I dare tempt e'en you. Methinks that guilt  
 Has something lovely which proclaims your pow'r——  
 But touch me with your hand, I die with bliss.  
 Why swells your eye ? By Heav'n, I'd rather see  
 All nature mourn, than you let fall a tear !  
 I own I'm mad, but I am mad of love.  
 You can't condemn me more than I myself ;  
 In that we are agreed ; agree in all.  
 Condemn, but pity me ; resent, but yield ;  
 For, oh, I burn, I rave, I die with love !

*Mand.* Oh, Sir!——

*Myr.* Nay, do not weep so ; it will kill me ;  
 This moment, while I speak, my eyes are darken'd ;  
 I cannot see thee ; and my trembling limbs  
 Refuse to bear their weight : all left of life  
 Is that I love : if love was in our pow'r,  
 The fault were mine ; since not, you must comply.  
 How godlike to bestow more heav'nly joys  
 Than you can think, and I support, and live ?

*Mand.* Oh, how can you abuse your sacred reason,  
That particle of Heav'n, that soul of Jove,  
To varnish o'er, and paint so black a crime!  
Oh, Prince!——

*Myr.* What says Mandane?

*Mand.* Sir, observe me:

My bursting sighs, and ever-streaming tears,  
Your noble nature has with pity seen;  
But would they not work deeper in your soul,  
Were you convinc'd my sorrows flow for you?  
For you, my Lord, they flow; for I am safe;  
(I know you are surpris'd) they flow for you:  
Myron, my father's friend, my prince, my guest——  
Myron, my guardian god, attempts my peace.  
And need I further reason for these tears?  
Nature affords no object of concern  
So great, as to behold a gen'rous mind  
Driv'n by a sudden gust, and dash'd on guilt.  
'Tis base, you ought not; 'tis impracticable,  
You cannot—Make necessity your choice;  
Nor let one moment of defeated guilt,  
Of fruitless baseness, overthrow the glory  
Your whole illustrious life has dearly bought  
In toilsome marches, and in fields of blood.

*AULETES and Servants enter.*

*Aul.* My Lord, your life's beset; the room beneath  
Is throng'd with ruffians, which but wait the signal  
To rush and sheath their daggers in your heart.

*Myr.* Betray'd! Curs'd sorceress! It was a plot  
Concerted by them all to take my life,  
And this the bait to tempt me to the foil.  
She dies——

*Aul.* No ; first enjoy, then murder her——  
Trust to my conduct, and you still are safe.  
They all are mask'd ; I have my vizor too.  
But time is short ; for once confide in me.  
You, Sir, for safety, fly to your apartment ; [*To the Prince.*  
You, bear Mandane to her closet—You, [*To Servants.*  
Speed to the southern gate, and burst it open.

[*As the Servants seize Mandane, she gives the signal.*  
*She is borne off.*

RAMESES, and Conspirators, enter, mask'd.

*Ram.* The villain fled ! Perdition intercept him !  
Disperse ; fly several ways ; let each man bear  
A steady point, well levell'd at his heart.  
If he escapes us now, success attend him ;  
May he for ever triumph.

[*As they pass the stage in confusion, Auletes enters, mask'd,*  
*among them.*

*Aul.* Ha ! why halt you ?  
Pursue, pursue ! e'en now I saw the monster,  
The villain, Myron ; with these eyes I saw him  
Bearing his prize swift to the western gate :  
There, there it burst. [*A noise without.*

*All.* Away ; pursue. [*Exeunt.*

*Aul.* [*Without.*] 'Tis done ;  
Advance the massy bar, and all is safe :  
Stand here, and with your lives defend the pass.

MYRON enters.

*Myr.* I shall at least have time for vengeance on her,  
And then I care not if I die. Barbarians !  
Their swords are pointed at my life ! 'Tis well !  
But I will give them an excuse for murder ;



Such, such a cause—Off, love, and soft compassion;  
 Harden, each sinew of my heart, to steel.  
 I'll do, what, done, will shock myself, and those  
 Whom time sets farthest from this dreadful hour.

MANDANE enters, forc'd in by AULETES.

*Mand.* By all the pow'rs that can revenge a falshood,  
 I'm innocent from any thoughts of blood.

*Myr.* Why then your champions here in arms? 'Tis false.

*Mand.* Ah, let my life suffice you for the wrong  
 You charge upon me! Oh, my royal master!  
 My safety from all ill! my great defender!  
 Or did my father but insult my tears,  
 And give me to your care to suffer wrong?  
 Kill me, but not your friend, but not my father:  
 He loves us both, and my severe distress  
 Will scarce more deeply wound him than your guilt.

[Myron walks passionately at a distance.]

*Myr.* Slaves, are you sworn against me? Stop her voice,  
 And bear her to my chamber.

*Mand.* Oh, Sir! Oh, Myron!  
 Behold my tears—here I will fix for ever—  
 I'll clasp your feet, and grow into the earth—  
 Oh, cut me, hew me, give to every limb  
 A separate death!—but spare my spotless virtue;  
 But spare my fame—You wound to distant ages,  
 And through all time my memory will bleed.

*Myr.* Distraction! all the pains of hell are on me!

[As the Servants force in Mandane,

*Mand.* Oh, Memnon!—Oh, my Lord!—my life! where  
 art thou?

[She is borne off.]

Myron expresses sudden passion and surprize, stands awhile  
 fixed in astonishment, then speaks.

*Myr.* As many accidents concur to work

My passions up to this unheard-of crime,  
 As if the gods design'd it——Be it then  
 Their fault, not mine——Memnon! said she not Memnon?  
 My heart began to stagger, but 'tis over——  
 Heav'n blast me, if I thought it possible  
 I could be still more curs'd——That hated dog—  
 ' Her lord, her life!'—I thank her for my cure  
 Of all remorse and pity: this has left me  
 Without a check, and thrown the loosen'd reins  
 On my wild passion to run headlong on,  
 And in her ruin quench a double fire,  
 The blended rage of vengeance and of love.  
 Destruction full of transport! Lo, I come  
 Swift on the wing, to meet my certain doom:  
 I know the danger, and I know the shame;  
 But, like our phoenix, in so rich a flame  
 I plunge triumphant my devoted head,  
 And doat on death in that luxurious bed. [Exit.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

MYRON *enters in the utmost disorder, bare-headed, without Light, &c. Walks disturbedly before he speaks.*

*Myron.*

HENCEFORTH let no man trust the first false step  
 Of guilt; it hangs upon a precipice,  
 Whose steep descent in last perdition ends!  
 How far am I plung'd down beyond all thought  
 Which I this evening fram'd!—But be it so——  
 Consummate horror! guilt beyond a name!  
 Dare not, my soul, repent: in thee repentance

Were second guilt ; and thou blasphem'st just Heav'n,  
By hoping mercy. Ah ! my pain will cease  
When gods want pow'r to punish. Ha ! the dawn !—  
Rise never more, O Sun ! let night prevail,  
Eternal darkness close the world's wide scene,  
And hide me from Nicanor and myself.

AULETES *enters.*

Who's there ?

*Aul.* My lord !

*Myr.* Auletes !

*Aul.* Guard your life :

The house is rous'd, the servants all alarm'd,  
The gliding tapers dart from room to room ;  
Solemn confusion, and a trembling haste,  
Mix'd with pale horror, glares on ev'ry face :  
The strengthen'd foe has rush'd upon your guard,  
And cut their passage through them to the gate.  
Implacable Rameses leads them on,  
Breathing revenge, and panting for your blood.

*Myr.* Why, let them come, let in the raging torrent ;  
I wish the world would rise in arms against me,  
For I must die, and I would die in state.

*The Doors are burst open, Servants pass the Stage in tumult,  
RAMESES, &c. pursue MYRON and his Guards over the  
Stage, then RAMESES and SYPHOCES enter, meeting.*

*Ram.* Where's the Prince ?

*Syph.* The monster stands at bay ;

We can no more than shut him from escape,  
Till further force arrive.

*Ram.* O, my Syphoces



*Syph.* This is a grief, but not for words.  
Does she still live?

*Ram.* She lives——But, oh, how bless'd  
Are they which are no more! By stealth I saw her:  
Cast on the ground, in mourning weeds she lies,  
Her torn and loosen'd tresses shade her round,  
Through which her face, all pale, as she were dead,  
Gleams like a sickly moon. Too great her grief  
For words or tears; but ever and anon,  
After a dreadful, still, insidious calm,  
Collecting all her breath, long, long suppress'd,  
She sobs her soul out in a lengthen'd groan,  
So sad, it breaks the hearts of all that hear,  
And sends her maids in agonies away.

*Syph.* Oh, tale, too mournful to be thought on!

*Ram.* Hold——

No, let her virgins weep; forbear, Syphoces,  
Tear out an eye, but damp not our revenge.  
Dispatch your letters; I'll go comfort her.

*A Servant enters, and speaks aside to Rameses.*

[*Exit Syphoces.*

And has she then commanded none approach her?  
I'm sorry for it; but I cannot blame her:  
Such is the dreadful ill, that it converts  
All offer'd cure into a new disease;  
It shuns our love, and comfort gives her pain.

*SYPHOCES re-enters.*

*Syph.* Your father is return'd: redundant Nile,  
Broke from its channel, overswells the pass,  
And sends him back to wait the waters fall.

*Ram.* And is he then return'd? I tremble for him.

I see his white head rolling in the dust.  
But haste, it is our duty to receive him.

[*Exeunt.*

MYRON *enters.*

*Myr.* I feel a pain of which I am not worthy,  
A pain, an anguish, which the honest man  
Alone deserves. Is it not wond'rous strange  
That I who stabb'd the very heart of nature,  
Should have surviving ought of man about me?  
And yet, I know not how, of gratitude  
And friendship still the stubborn sparks survive,  
And poor Nicanor's torments pierce my soul.  
Confusion! he's return'd.

[*Starting.*

NICANOR *enters.*

*Nic.* My prince—— [ *Advancing to embrace.*

*Myr.* My friend—— [ *Turning aside and hiding his face.*

*Nic.* I interrupt you.

*Myr.* I had thee there. [ *Smiting his breast.*

Before thou cam'st, my thoughts were bent upon thee.

*Nic.* Oh, sir, you are too kind!

*Myr.* Death, tortures, hell! [ *Aside.*

*Nic.* What says my prince?

*Myr.* A sudden pain,

To which I'm subject, struck across my heart.

'Tis past; I'm well again.

*Nic.* Heav'n guard your health!

*Myr.* Dost thou then wish it?

*Nic.* Am I then distrusted?

'Then when I sav'd your life, I did the least

I e'er would do to serve you.

*Myr.* Barbarous man!

Nic. What have I done, my prince? Which way offended?  
Has not my life, my soul, been your's?

Myr. Oh!—Oh!

Nic. By Heav'n, I'm wrong'd! Speak, and I'll clear  
myself. *[Takes him by the hand.]*

Myr. I'm poison and destruction; curse thy gods;  
I'll kill thee in compassion—Oh, my brain!

Away, away, away! *[Shoves him from him; going.]*

Nic. Do, kill me, prince.——

You shall not go. I do demand the cause  
Which has put forth thy hand against thy father?  
For, thus provok'd, I'll do myself the justice  
To tell thee, youth, that I deserve that name;  
Nor have thy parents lov'd thee more than I.

Myr. I hear them; they are on me—Loose thy hold,  
Or I will plant my dagger in thy breast.

Nic. Your dagger's needless. Oh, ungrateful boy!

Myr. Forgive me, father; oh, my soul bleeds for thee!

*[Embrace.]*

*As he is going out, AULETES meets him, and speaks to him  
aside.*

What, no escape? On ev'ry side inclos'd?  
Then I resolve to perish by his hand:  
'Tis just I should, and meaner death I scorn.  
But how to work him to my fate, to sting  
His passion up so high, will be a task  
To me severe, as difficult as strange.  
Support me, cruel heart; it must be done.

*[Aside.]*

Nic. Now, from my very soul, I cannot tell,  
But 'tis enchantment all; for things so strange  
Have happen'd, I might well distrust my sense.  
But, if mine eyes are true, I plainly read



A heart in anguish, and I must confess,  
Your grief is just—It was inhuman in you——  
But tell the cause, unravel from the bottom  
The mystery that has embroil'd our loves ;  
(For still, my prince, I love, since you repent.)  
What accident depriv'd me of my friend,  
And lost you to yourself?

*Myr.* A traitor's sight !

*Nic.* Beneath my roof?

*Myr.* Beneath thy very helmet.

Thou art a traitor. Guard thyself.

[*Draws.*

*Nic.* Distraction !

Traitor !——For standing by your father's throne,  
And stemming the wild stream that roars against it,  
Of rebel subjects, and of foreign foes?  
For training thee to glory and to war?  
For taking thee from out thy mother's arms,  
A mortal child, and kindling in thy soul  
The noble ardors of a future god?  
Farewell, I dare not trust my temper more.

*Myr.* Grey-headed, venerable traitor !

RAMESES enters.

*Ram.* Ha !

Turn, turn, blasphemer, and repress thy taunts ;  
All provocation's needless, but thy sight.

[*He assaults the Prince as he is going off: Nicanor binds him.*

*Nic.* Forbear, my son.

*Ram.* Forbear !

*Nic.* If I am calm,

Your rage should cease.

*Ram.* No, 'tis my own revenge;

Unless, sir, you disown me for your son.

*Nic.* Thy sword against thy prince?

*Ram.* A villain!

*Nic.* Hold.

*Ram.* The worst of villains.

*Nic.* 'Tis too much.

*Ram.* Oh, father!——

*Nic.* What would'st thou?

*Ram.* Sir, your daughter——

*Nic.* Rightly thought;

She best can comfort me in all my sorrow.

Call, call Mandane; to behold my child,

Would cheer me in the agonies of death:

Call her, Rameses——Am I disobey'd?

*Ram.* Oh, sir!——

*Nic.* What mean those transports of concern?

*Ram.* Though I'm an outcast from your love, I weep,  
To open your black scene of misery.

*Nic.* Where will this end?——Oh, my fore-boding heart!

*Ram.* Should he, to whom, as to a god, at parting,  
You gave, with streaming eyes, your soul's delight,  
While yet your last embrace was warm about him,  
Gloomy and dreadful as this stormy night,  
Rush on your child, your comfort, your Mandane,  
All sweet and lovely as the blushing morn,  
Seize her by force, now trembling, breathless, pale,  
Prostrate in anguish, tearing up the earth,  
Imploring, shrieking to the gods and you,  
Oh, hold my brain:——Look there, and think the rest.

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SCENE II.

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*Opens. A darkened Chamber, a Bed, and the Curtains drawn.  
Women pass out, weeping, &c. Nicanor falls back on  
Rameses.*

*Nic.* Is't possible!—My child!—My only daughter!  
The growth of my own life! That sweeten'd age  
And pain!—Oh, nature bleeds within me!

*Mand.* Weep not, my virgins, cease your useless tears,  
Kindness is thrown away upon despair,  
And but provokes the sorrow it would ease.

*Nic.* Assist me forwards.

*Mand.* Most unwelcome news!  
Is he return'd? The gods support my father.  
I now begin to wish he lov'd me less.

*Nic.* There, there she pierc'd the very tend'rest nerve :  
She pities me, dear babe, she pities me :  
Through all the raging tortures of her soul  
She feels my pain! But hold, my heart, to thank her,  
Then burst at once, and let the pangs of death  
Put Myron from my thought. [Goes to her.]

*Mand.* Severest fate  
Has done its worst—I have drawn my father's tears.—

*Nic.* Forbear to call me by that tender name ;  
Since I can't help thee, I would fain forget  
Thou art a part of me—it only sharpens  
Those pangs, which, if a stranger, I should feel.—  
Oh, spare me, my Mandane ; to behold thee  
In such excess of sorrow, quite destroys me,  
And I shall die, and leave thee unreveng'd.



*Mand.* Oh, sir ! there are misfortunes most severe,  
Which yet can bear the light, and, well sustain'd,  
Adorn the sufferer.—But this affliction  
Has made despair a virtue, and demands  
Utter extinction, and eternal night,  
As height of happiness. *[Scene shuts on them.]*

SYPHOCES enters.

*Ram.* Oh, my Syphoces !

*Syph.* And does this move you ? Does this melt you down,  
And pour you out in sorrow ? Then fly far,  
Ere Memnon comes ; he comes with flushing cheek,  
And beating heart, to bear a bride away,  
And bless his fate ; how dreadfully deceiv'd !

*Ram.* The melancholy scene at length begins.

MEMNON enters.

*Mem.* Oh, give me leave  
To yield to nature, and indulge my joy,  
My friend ! My brother ! Oh, the ecstasy  
That fires my veins, and dances at my heart !  
You love me not, if you refuse to join  
In all the just extravagance, and flight  
Of boundless transport on this happy hour.  
Where is my soul, my bliss, my lovely bride !  
Call, call her forth ; Oh, haste ! the priest expects us,  
And ev'ry moment is a crime to love.

*Ram.* Speak to him.—Pr'ythee speak. *[To Syph.]*

*Syph.* By heav'n, I cannot.

*Mem.* What can this mean ?

*Ram.* Syphoces.

*Syph.* Nay, Rameses.

*Mem.* By all the gods, they struggle with their sorrows,

And swallow down their tears to hide them from me.  
By friendship's sacred name, I charge you, speak.

*[They look on him with the utmost concern, and go out on different sides of the stage.]*

Was ever man thus left to dreadful thought,  
And all the horrors of a black surmise!  
What woe is this, too big to be express'd?  
Oh, my sad heart: Why bod'st thou so severely:  
Mandane's life in danger! There indeed;  
Fortune, I fear thee still; her beauties arm thee,  
Her virtues made thee dreadful to my thought;  
But for my love how I could laugh at fate!

*A Servant enters, and gives him a paper. He reads. RAMESES enters; MEMNON swoons and falls on RAMESES.*

*Ram.* 'Twere happy if his soul would ne'er return;  
The gods may still be merciful in this.—  
His lids begin to rise.—How fares my friends?

*Mem.* Did Myron feel my pangs, you'd pity him.

*SYPHOCES enters.*

*Syph.* Fainting beneath th' oppression of her grief,  
This way Mandane seeks the fresher air:  
Let us withdraw; 'twill pain her to be seen,  
And, most of all, by you.

*Mem.* By my own heart,  
I judge, and am convinc'd.—I dare not see her,  
The sight would strike me dead.

*[As Memnon is going, Mandane meets him; both start back, she shrieks. Memnon recovers himself, and falls at her knees, embracing them; she tries to disengage, he not permitting, she raises him; he takes her passionately in his arms. They continue speechless and motionless for some time.]*

*Ram.* Was ever mournful interview like this?  
See how they writhe with anguish! Hear them groan!  
See the large silent dew run trickling down,  
As from the weeping marble; passion choaks  
Their words, and they're the statues of despair!

*Mem.* Oh, my Mandane:

*[At this she violently breaks from him, and exit.]*

But one moment more.

*[As Memnon is following, Rameses holds him.]*

*Ram.* Brother——

*Mem.* Forgive me——

*Ram.* You're to blame.——

*Mem.* Look there,

*[Pointing after her.]*

My heart is bursting.

*Ram.* With revenge.

*Mem.* And love.

*Ram.* Revenge.

*Mem.* One dear embrace, 'twill edge my sword.

*Syph.* No, Memnon, if our swords now want an edge,  
They'll want it for ever; to this spot I charm thee;  
By the dread words, revenge and liberty!  
This is the crisis of our fates; this moment  
The guardian gods of Egypt hover o'er us,  
They watch to see us act like prudent men,  
And out of ills extract our happiness.  
My friends, these dire calamities, like poison,  
May have their wholesome use! This sad occasion,  
If manag'd artfully, revives our hopes;  
It gives Nicanor to our sinking faction,  
And still the tyrant shakes.

*Ram.* My father comes:

Or snatch this moment, or despair for ever.  
While passions glow, the heart, like heated steel,  
Takes each impression, and is work'd at pleasure.



NICANOR *enters.*

*Nic.* Why have the gods chose out my weakest hours,  
To set their terrors in array against me?  
This would beat down the vigour of my youth,  
Much more grey hairs, and life worn down so low.  
Vain man! to be so fond of breathing long,  
And spinning out a thread of misery.  
The longer life the greater choice of evil;  
The happiest man is but a wretched thing,  
That steals poor comfort from comparison;  
What then am I? Here will I sit me down,  
Brood o'er my cares, and think myself to death.  
Draw near, Rameses; I was rash ere while,  
And chid thee without cause.—How many years  
Have I been cas'd in steel?

*Ram.* Full threescore years  
Have chang'd the seasons o'er your crested brow,  
And seen your faulchion dy'd in hostile blood.

*Nic.* How many triumphs since the king has reign'd!

*Ram.* They number just your battles, one for one.

*Nic.* True, I have follow'd the rough trade of war  
With some success, and can, without a blush,  
Review the shaken fort, and sanguine plain.  
I have thought pain a pleasure, thirst and toil  
Blest objects of ambition; I remember,  
(Nor do my foes forget that bloody day;  
When the barb'd arrow from my gaping thigh  
Was wrench'd with labour, I disdain'd to groan,  
Because I suffer'd for Busiris sake.

*Ram.* The king is not to blame.

*Nic.* Is not the prince his son?

*Ram.* But in himself.—

*Nic.* And has he lost his guilt,                    [*Rising in a passion.*  
 'Cause he has injur'd me? Ere while thy blood  
 Was kindled at his name.—Didst thou not tell me  
 A shameful black design on poor Amelia?  
 Oh, Memnon! what a glorious race is this,  
 To make the gods a party in our cause,  
 And draw down blessings on us!

*Mem.* He that supports them  
 In such black crimes, is sharer of their guilt.

*Nic.* Point out the man, and with these wither'd hands,  
 I'd fly upon his throat, though he were lodg'd  
 Within the circle of Busiris' arms.

*Ram.* He that prevents it not, when in his power,  
 Supports them in their course of flaming guilt,  
 And you are he.

*Nic.* Thou rav'st.

*Syph.* The army's your's.  
 I've sounded every chief; but wave your finger,  
 Thousands fall off the tyrant's side, and leave him  
 Naked of help, and open to destruction.  
 But sweep his minions, cut a pander's throat,  
 Or lop a sycophant, the work is done.

*Nic.* What would you have me do?                    [*Starting.*

*Mem.* Let not your heart  
 Fly off from your own thought: be truly great,  
 Resent your country's suff'rings as your own,  
 A generous soul is not confin'd at home,  
 But spreads itself abroad o'er all the public,  
 And feels for every member of the land.  
 What have we seen for twenty rolling years,  
 But one long tract of blood! Or, what is worse,  
 Throng'd dungeons pouring forth perpetual groans,  
 And free-born men oppress'd! Shall half mankind

Be doom'd to curse the moment of their birth ?  
Shall all the mother's fondness be employ'd  
To rear them up to bondage, give them strength  
To bear afflictions, and support their chains ?

*Syph.* To you the valiant youth most humbly bend.

[ *Kneeling.*

And beg that nature's gifts, the vigorous nerve  
And graceful port, design'd to bless the world,  
And take your great example in the field,  
May not be forc'd by lewdness in high place,  
To other toils, to labour for disease,  
To wither in a loath'd embrace, and die  
At an inglorious distance from the foe.

*Ram.* To you Amelia lifts her hands for safety. [ *Kneeling.*

*Mem.* To you—to you—— [ *Bursting in tears.*

*Nic.* By heav'n he cannot speak.—I understand thee ;  
Rise—rise—my son. Rise all ; your work is done ;  
They perish all, these creatures of my sword.  
Have I not seen whole armies vaulted o'er  
With flying javelins, which shut out the day,  
And fell in rattling storms at my command,  
To slay, and bury proud Basiris' foe ?  
He lives and reigns, for I have been his friend ;  
But I'll unmake him, and plough up the ground,  
Where his proud palace stands.

[ *Exit.*

*Mem.* Oh, my Mandane !

The gods by dreadful means bestow success,  
And in their vengeance, most severely bless :  
From thy bright streaming eyes our triumphs flow,  
The tyrant falls, Mandane strikes the blow.  
So the fair moon, when seas swell high, and pour  
A wasteful deluge on the trembling shore,



Inspires the tumult from her clouded throne,  
Where silent, pensive, pale, she sits alone,  
And all the distant ruin is her own.

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ACT V. SCENE I.

*The Field.* BUSIRIS and AULETES enter. *An Alarm at a distance.*

*Busiris.*

WELCOME the voice of war! though loud the sound,  
It faintly speaks the language of my heart,  
It whispers what I mean. But say, Auletes,  
What urge these forlorn rebels in excuse  
For choosing ruin?

*Aul.* Various their complaints;  
But some are loud, that while your heavy hand  
Presses whole millions with incessant toil,  
(Toils fitter far for beasts than human creatures)  
In building wonders for the world to gaze at,  
Weeds are their food, their cup the muddy Nile.

*Bus.* Do they not build for me? Let that reward them.  
Yes, I will build more wonders to be gaz'd at,  
And temper all my cement with their blood.  
Whose pains and art reform'd the puzzled year,  
Thus drawing down the sun to human use,  
And making him their servant? Who push'd off,  
With mountain dams, the broad redundant Nile  
Descended from the moon, and bid it wander  
A stranger stream in unaccustom'd shores?  
Who from the Ganges to the Danube reigns?

But virtues are forgot!—Away—to arms!  
I'll call to mind my glorious ancestry,  
Which for ten thousand rolling years renown'd,  
Shines up into eternity itself,  
And ends among the gods.

[*An Alarm.*]

MEMNON *enters.*

*Aul.* The rebel braves us.

*Bus.* Hold, let our weapons thirst one moment longer:  
And death stand still, till he receives my nod.  
Whom meet I in the midst of my own realm,  
With bold defiance on his brow?

*Mem.* The slave  
Whom dread Busiris lately laid in chains,  
An emblem of his country.

*Bus.* Is it thus  
You thank my royal bounty?

*Mem.* Thus you thank'd  
The good Artaxes; thus you thank'd my father.

*Bus.* What I have done, conclude most right and just,  
For I have done it, and the gods alone  
Shall ask me why. Thou liv'st, although they fell;  
And if they fell unjustly, greater thanks  
Are due from thee, whom ev'n injustice spar'd.

*Mem.* Thy kindnesses are wrongs, they mean to sooth  
My injur'd soul, and steal it from revenge.

*Bus.* Turn back thine eye; behold, thy troops are thin,  
Thy men are rarely sprinkled o'er the field,  
And yet thou carriest millions on thy tongue.

*Mem.* All thy blood thirsty sword has laid in dust  
Are on my side, they come in bloody swarms,  
And throng my banners; thy unequall'd crimes  
Have made thee weak, and rob my victory.——

*Bus.* Ha !

*Mem.* Nay, stamp not, tyrant ; I can stamp as loud,  
And raise as many dæmons at the sound.

*Bus.* I wear a diadem.

*Mem.* And I a sword.

*Bus.* Yet, yet submit, I give thee life.

*Mem.* Secure your own :

No more, Busiris——Bid the sun farewell.

*Bus.* Busiris, and the sun, should set together ;  
If this day's angry gods ordain my fate,  
Know thou, I fall like some vast pyramid,  
I bury thousands in my great destruction,  
And thou the first.—Slave ! in the front of battle,  
There thou shalt find me.

*Mem.* Thou shalt find me there,  
And have well paid that gratitude I owe. [Exeunt.

*A continued Alarm.* MYRON and NICANOR enter, meeting.

*Nic.* Does not mine eye strike horror through thy soul,  
And shake the weapon from thy trembling arm ?  
Base boy ! The foulness of thy guilt secures thee  
From my reproach, I dare not name thy crime.

*Myr.* Old man, didst thou stand up in thy own cause,  
I then should be afraid of fourscore years,  
And tremble at grey hairs ; but since thy frenzy  
Has lent those venerable locks to cast  
A gloss of virtue on the blackest crime,  
Accurst rebellion, this gives back my heart,  
With all its rage, and I'm a man again.

*Nic.* Come on, and use that force in arms, I taught thee ;  
I'll now resume the life I gave so late.

*Myr.* I grieve thou hast but half a life to lose,  
And dost defraud my vengeance——At my touch



Thou moulder'st into dust, and art forgotten.

[*Preparing to fight, Myron stops short.*]

Ah, no ! I cannot fight with thee : begone,  
And shake elsewhere : thou canst not want a death  
In such a field, though I refuse it to thee.  
Rameses, Memnon, give them to my sword,  
Sustain'd by thousands ; but to fly from thee,  
From thee, most injur'd man, shall be my praise,  
And rise above the conquest of my foes.

*Nic.* 'Tis not old age, th' avenging gods pursue thee !

[*He retires before Nicanor off the Stage. A loud Alarm.*]

*BUSIRIS and AULETES enter, in pursuit.*

*Bus.* 'Tis well, I like this madness of the field ;  
Let heighten'd horrors, and a waste of death,  
Inform the world Busiris is in arms.  
But then I grudge the glory of my sword  
To slaves and rebels ; while they die by me,  
They cheat my vengeance, and survive in fame.

*Aul.* I panted after in the paths of death,  
And could not but from far behold your plume  
O'er-shadow slaughter'd heaps, while your bright helm  
Struck a distinguish'd terror through the field ;  
The distant legions trembling as it blaz'd.

*Bus.* Think not a crown alone lights up my name,  
My hand is deep in fight. Forbid it, Isis,  
That whilst Busiris treads the sanguine field,  
The foremost spirit of his host should conquer  
But by example, and beneath the shade  
Of this high-brandish'd arm. Didst thou e'er fear ?  
Sure 'tis an art. I know not how to fear.  
'Tis one of the few things beyond my power ;  
And if death must be fear'd before 'tis felt,

Thy master is immortal. Oh, Auletes——

But while I speak, they live !

Where fall the sounding cataracts of Nile,

The mountains tremble, and the waters boil ;

Like them I'll rush, like them my fury pour,

And give the future world one wonder more. [ *Exeunt.*

MYRON *enters, engaged with a Party; his plume is smitten off.*

*He drives the foe, and returns.*

Myr. When death's so near, but dares not venture on us,

'Tis Heaven's regard, a kind of salutation,

Which to ourselves our own importance shews.——

Faint as I am, and almost sick of blood,

There is one cordial would revive me still ;

The sight of Memnon ; place that fiend before me. [ *Exit.*

MEMNON *enters.*

Mem. Where, where's the Prince ? Oh, give him to my sword !

His tall white plume, which like a high wrought form

Floated on the tempestuous stream of fight,

Shew'd where he swept the field ; I follow'd swift,

But my approach has turn'd him into air——

MYRON *enters.*

The fight but now begins !

Myr. Why, who art thou ?

Mem. Prince, I am——

Myr. Memnon.

[ *Disdainfully.*

Mem. No——I'm Mandane.

Myr. Ha !

*Mem.* She's here, she's here, she's all: her wrongs and virtues!  
[Striking his head and breast.

Virtues and wrongs! Thou worse than murderer!

*Myr.* I charge thee name her not, forbear the croak  
With that ill-omen'd note.

*Mem.* Mandane!

*Myr.* Be it so.

When I reflect on her mean love for thee,  
And plot against my life, my pain is less.

*Mem.* 'Tis false; she meant! she knew it not; Rameses,  
He, only he, was conscious of the thought.

*Myr.* Then I'm a wretch indeed!

*Mem.* As such I'll use thee:

I'll crush thee like some poison on the earth,  
Then haste and cleanse me in the blood of men.

*Myr.* I thank thee for this spirit which exalts thee  
Into a foe, I need not blush to meet.

Now from my soul, it joys me thou art found,  
And found alive; by heav'n, so much I hate thee,  
I fear'd that thou wast dead, and hadst escap'd me:  
I'll drench my sword in thy detested blood,  
Or soon make thee immortal by my own.  
Villain!

*Mem.* Myron!

*Myr.* Rebel!

*Mem.* Myron!

*Myr.* Hell!

*Mem.* Mandane!

[Myron falls.

*Myr.* Just the blow, and juster still,  
Because embitter'd on me by that hand  
I most detest: which gives my soul an earnest  
Of vast unfathomable woes to come,  
'That dreadful dowry for my dreadful love.



I leave the world my misery's example,  
If us'd aright, no trivial legacy.

[Dies.

SYPHOCES *enters.*

*Syph.* My lord, I bring you most unwelcome news.  
As poor Mandane wander'd near the field,  
In hope to see her injuries reveng'd ;  
Thoughtless of any suff'rings but the past,  
A party of the foe, saw, seiz'd, and bore her off.

*Mem.* Veng'ance and conquest now are trivial things,  
Love made their prize ! 'tis impious in my soul  
To entertain a thought but of her rescue.  
Now, now, I plunge into the thickest war,  
As some bold diver from a precipice  
Into mid ocean, to regain a gem,  
Whose loss impoverish'd kings, to bring it back,  
Or see the day no more.

[Exeunt.

MANDANE *enters, prisoner.*

*Mand.* A gen'rous foe will hear his captive speak ;  
A benefit, thus kneeling, I implore :  
Let one of all those swords that glitter round me,  
Vouchsafe to hide its point within my breast.

MEMNON *enters.*

*Mem.* Ah, villains ! Cursed atheists ! Can you bear  
That posture from that form ? What, what are numbers,  
When I behold those eyes ? Not mine the glory,  
That singly thus I quell a host of foes.  
Inhuman robbers ! Oh, bring back my soul.

[*They force her off, he rushes in upon them, and is taken.*  
Poor comfort to mankind, that they can lose

Their lives but once—But, oh ! a thousand times  
Be torn from what they love.

RAMESES *enters*.

*Ram.* Far have I waded in the bloody field,  
Laborious through the stubborn ranks of war,  
And trac'd thee in a labyrinth of death ;  
But thus to find thee !—Better find thee dead !  
These slaves will use thee ill.

*Mem.* Of that no more ;  
Myron is dead, and by this arm.

*Ram.* I thank thee.  
All my few spirits left, exult with joy ;  
I'll chase and scourge him through the lower world.

*Mem.* Alas, thou bleed'st.

*Ram.* Curse on the tyrant's sword,  
I bleed to death ; but could not leave the world,  
Without a last embrace. Just now I met  
The poor Mandane.

*Mem.* Quickly speak. What said she ?

*Ram.* Nothing of comfort. Cease to ask me farther.  
If you meet more, your meeting will be sad.—  
Your arm, I faint—Ah, what is human life ?  
How like the dial's tardy-moving shade !  
Day after day slides from us unperceiv'd !  
The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth,  
Too subtle<sup>s</sup> is the movement to be seen,  
Yet soon the hour is up—and we are gone.  
Farewell, I pity thee.

[*Dies*.

*Mem.* Farewell, brave friend !  
Would I could bear thee company to rest,  
But life in all its terror stands before me,  
And shuts the gate of peace against my wishes.—

Do I not hear a peal of distant thunder?  
 And see, a sudden darkness shuts the day,  
 And quite blots out the sun—But what to me,  
 The colour of the sky? A death-cold dew  
 Hangs on my brow, and all my slacken'd joints  
 Are shook without a cause—A groan! from whence?  
 Again! And no one near me? Vain delusion!  
 Yet not I fear in vain! some ill is tow'rds me,  
 More dreadful sure, than all that's past. Mandane!  
 I hop'd she was at peace, and past the reach  
 Of this ill news, but such my wayward fate  
 I cannot ask a curse, but 'tis deny'd me:  
 And could I wish I ne'er should see her more?

MANDANE enters, guarded.

*Mand.* This is my brother; a short privacy  
 Is a small favour you may grant a foe.

*Guard.* Let it be short, we may not wait your leisure.

*Mem.* 'Tis wondrous strange, there's something holds me  
 from her,

And keeps this foot fast rooted to the ground.

This is the last time I shall ever pray.

To me, ye gods, confine your threat'ned vengeance,

And I will bless your mercies while I suffer.

[Memnon and Mandane advance slowly to the front of the  
 stage.

*Mand.* What didst thou pray for?

*Mem.* For thy peace.

*Mand.* 'Twas kind:

But, Oh! those hands in bonds deny the blessing,

For which they earnestly were rais'd to heav'n.

*Mem.* I fear so too; what we have yet to do



Must soon be done ; this meeting is our last.  
How shall we use it ?

*Mand.* How ? Consult thy chains,  
And my calamities.

*Mem.* Sad counsellors,  
And cruel their advice—Are there no other ?

*Mand.* I look around—and find no glimpse of hope ;  
A perfect night of horror and despair !

*Mem.* Of horror and despair, indeed, Mandane !  
Canst thou believe me ? Nay, can I believe  
Myself ? The last thing that I wish'd for was—'tis false.  
The weight of my misfortune hurts my mind.

*Mand.* Was what ?

*Mem.* I dare not think ; to think is to look down  
A precipice ten thousand fathoms deep,  
That turns my brain—Oh ! Oh !

*Mand.* Memnon, no more :  
That silence and those tears need no explaining ;  
And it is kind, with such severe reluctance  
To think upon my death—though necessary.

*Mem.* Ah, hold ! You plant a thousand daggers here.  
Talk not of dying—I disown the thought ;  
Right is not right, and reason is not reason ;  
All is distraction when I look on thee,  
Oh, all ye pitying gods ! dash out from nature  
Your stars, your sun, but let Mandane live.

*Mand.* No : death long since was my confirm'd resolve.

*Mem.* Myron is dead.

*Mand.* What joy a heart like mine  
Can feel, it feels—had he been never born,  
I might have liv'd—'tis now—impossible.

*Mem.* This even to my miseries I owe,  
That it discovers greater virtues still,

In her my soul adores——Oh, my Mandane!  
Oh, glorious maid! then thou wilt be at peace——

[Memnon walks thoughtfully, and returns.

Must I survive, and change thy tenderness  
For a stern master, and perpetual chains?  
Long I may groan on earth to sate their malice,  
Then through slow torments linger into death,  
No steel to stab, no wall to dash my brain!

Mand. Ha!

Mem. Why thus fix'd in thought? What mighty birth  
Is lab'ring in your soul? Your eyes speak wonders.—

Mand. Will not the blood-hounds be content with life?

Mem. Alas, Mandane! No; they study nature  
To find out all her secret seats of pain,  
And carry killing to a dreadful art:  
A simple death in Egypt is for friends.

Mand. Oh, then it must be so!—and yet it cannot.—

Mem. What means this sudden paleness?

Mand. Heav'n assist me!

[Feeling in her bosom, she swoons.

Mem. My love! Mandane! hear me, my espous'd!  
My dearest heart! the infant of my bosom!  
Whom I would foster with my vital blood.

Mand. 'Tis well, and in return I give thee—this.

[Sheav's a dagger.

Mem. Millions of thanks, thou refuge in despair.

Mand. Terrible kindness! Horrid mercy! Oh!  
I cannot give it thee.

Mem. Full well I know

Thy tender soul, and I must force it from thee.

[As he is struggling with her for the dagger, she speaks.

Mand. My Lord! my soul! myself! You tear my heart.  
Art thou not dearer to my eyes than light?

Dost thou not circulate through all my veins?  
Mingle with life, and form my very soul!

*Mem.* Now, monsters, I defy you: fate forbids  
A long farewell, my guard may interpose,  
And make your favour vain—Thus, only thus. [*Embrace.*  
And now——

*Mand.* Ah, no! Since last I saw thee, thrice I rais'd  
My trembling arm, and thrice I let it fall.—— [*Holds his arm.*

If you refuse compassion to my sex,  
Memnon betrays me, and is Myron's friend.——  
As I a poniard, you supply an arm,  
And I shall still be happy in your love.

[*After a pause of astonishment, he sinks gently on the earth.*

*Mem.* From dreadful to more dreadful I am plung'd,  
And find in deepest anguish deeper still.  
I can't complain in common with mankind——  
But am a wretched species all alone.  
Must I not only lose thee, but be curs'd  
To sprinkle my own hands with thy life-blood?

*Mand.* It cannot be avoided.

*Mem.* Nor perform'd.  
Lift up my hand against thee as a foe!  
I, who should save thee from thy very father,  
And teach thy dearest friends to use thee well,  
Make kindness kind, and soften all their smiles?  
Oh, my Mandane! Think how I have lov'd!  
Oh, my Mandane! Think upon thy pow'r!  
How often hast thou seen me pale with joy,  
And trembling at a smile? and shall I——

*Mand.* Myron—— [*At that Memnon starts up suddenly.*

*Mem.* Ah, hold! I charge thee, hold! One glance that way  
Awakes my hell, and blows up all its flames.



The world turns round, my heart is sick to death!

Oh, my distraction! perfect loss of thought!

*Mand.* Why stand you like a statue? Are you dead?  
What do you fold so fast within your arms?

Why with fix'd eye-balls do you pierce the ground?

Why shift your place, as if you trod on fire?

Why gnaw your lip, and groan so dreadfully?

My Lord, if I have spent whole live-long nights

In tears, and sigh'd away the day in private,

Only oppress'd with an excess of love,

Oh, turn, and speak to me!

*Mem.* And these, no doubt,  
Are arguments that I should draw thy blood.—  
No child was ever lull'd upon the breast  
With half that tenderness has melted from thee,  
And fell like balm upon my wounded soul.  
And shall I murder thee? Yes, thus—thus—thus.

[*Embracing some time.*]

*Mand.* Alas! My Lord forgets we are to die.

[*Memnon gazes with wonder on the dagger.*]

*Mem.* By heav'n I had! my soul had took her flight  
In bliss—Why, is not this our bridal-day?

*Mand.* That way distraction lies.

*Mem.* Indeed it does.

*Both.* Oh! Oh!

*Mand.* Thy sighs and groans are sharper than thy steel.  
The guard is on us.

*Mem.* Then it must be done.

Sun, hide thy face, and put the world in mourning,  
Though blood start out for tears, 'tis done—but one,  
One last embrace. [*As he embraces her, she bursts into tears.*]  
Let me not see a tear.—I could as soon  
Stab at the face of heaven, as kill thee weeping.

*Mand.* 'Tis past, I am compos'd.

*Mem.* And now, and now,

*Mand.* Be not so fearful, 'tis the second blow  
Will pain my heart—indeed this will not hurt me.

*Mem.* Oh, thou hast stung my soul quite through and  
through,

With those kind words; I had just steel'd my breast;

[*Dashing down the dagger.*]

And thou undo'st it all—I could not bear

To raze thy skin, to save the world from ruin.

*Mand.* If you're a woman, I'll be something more.

[*Stabs herself.*]

I shall not taste of heaven till you arrive.

[*Dies.*]

*Mem.* Struck home—and in her heart.—She's dead al-  
ready,

And now with me all nature is expir'd.—

My lovely bride; now we again are happy, [*Stabs himself.*]

And better worlds prepare our nuptial bow'r.—

Now ev'ry splendid object of ambition,

Which lately with their various glosses play'd

Upon my brain, and fool'd my idle heart,

Are taken from me by a little mist,

And all the world is vanish'd.

[*Dies.*]

*A March sounded. NICANOR and SYPHOCES enter,*  
*victorious.*

*The Guard which were advancing to the bodies, fly.*

*Nic.* The day's our own; the Persian's angry pow'rs  
Have well repaid this morning's insolence,  
And turn'd the desp'rate fortune of the field  
By sure, though late relief.

*Syph.* Nicanor, friend,  
I from the city bring you welcome news :  
My guilty letter from the amorous queen  
I spread amongst the multitude ; while yet  
Their blood was warm with reading the black scroll,  
Myris to view the fortune of the fight,  
Leaving her palace for the western tow'r,  
Was seiz'd, torn, scatter'd on the guilty spot  
Where her great brother fell.

*Nic.* The gods are just.

*Syph.* See where Busiris comes, your royal captive,  
In his misfortune great ; an awful ruin !  
And dreadful to the conqueror !

[*Nicanor advancing, sees the bodies.*

*Nic.* Sad sight !——

A sight, that teaches triumph how to mourn,  
And more than justifies these streaming tears.  
Even on the moment that my country's sav'd  
From sore oppression, and inglorious chains.

[*He falls on his Attendants.*

*A great Shout.* BUSIRIS enters, wounded.

*Bus.* Conquer'd ! 'Tis false ; I am your master still ;  
Your master, though in bonds : you stand aghast  
At your good fate, and, trembling, can't enjoy.  
Now from my soul I hug these welcome chains  
Which shew you all Busiris, and declare  
Crowns and success superfluous to my fame.——  
You think this streaming blood will low'r my thought :  
No, ye mistaken men, I smile at death ;  
For living here, is living all alone,  
To me a real solitude, amid



A throng of little beings, groveling round me ;  
Which yet usurp one common shape and name.  
I thank these wounds, these raging pains, which promise  
An interview with equals soon elsewhere.

[*He sees Memnon.*

Ha ! Dead ? 'Tis well ; he rose not to my sword,  
I only wish'd his fate, and there he lies.  
Some when they die, die all : their mould'ring clay  
Is but an emblem of their memories :  
The space quite closes up through which they pass'd.  
That I have liv'd, I leave a mark behind,  
Shall pluck the shining age from vulgar time,  
And give it whole to late posterity.  
My name is writ in mighty characters,  
Triumphant columns, and eternal domes,  
Whose splendor heightens our Egyptian day,  
Whose strength shall laugh at time, till their great basis,  
Old earth itself, shall fail. In after-ages,  
Who war or build, shall build or war from me,  
Grow great in each, as my example fires ;  
'Tis I of art the future wonders raise ;  
I fight the future battles of the world.—  
Great Jove, I come ! Egypt, thou art forsaken :  
Asia's impoverish'd by my sinking glories,  
And the world lessens, when Busiris falls.

[*Sinks.*

[*Dies.*

*Syph.* Bear the dead monarch to his pyramid ;  
And for what use soe'er it was design'd,  
By that high-minded, but mistaken man,  
There let him lie magnificent in death ;  
Great was his life, great be his monument :  
And on Busiris' nephew, young Arsaces,  
Of gentler spirit, let the crown devolve.

From this day's vengeance let the nations know,  
 Jove lays the pride of haughtiest monarchs low ;  
 And they, who kindled with ambitious fire,  
 In arts and arms with most success aspire,  
 If void of virtue, but provoke their doom,  
 Grasp at their fate, and build themselves a tomb.

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## EPILOGUE.

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BY A FRIEND.

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Spoken by MANDANE.

*THE* race of critics, dull judicious rogues,  
To mournful plays deny brisk epilogues.  
Each gentle swain, and tender nymph, say they,  
From a sad tale should go in tears away,  
From hence quite home, should streams of sorrow shed,  
And, drown'd in grief, steal supperless to bed.  
This doctrine is so grave, the sparks won't bear it;  
They love to go in humour to their claret.  
The cit, who owns a little fun worth buying,  
Holds half-a-crown too much to pay for crying;  
Besides, who knows, without these healing arts,  
But love might turn your heads, and break your hearts;  
And the poor author, by imagin'd woes,  
Might people Beth'lem with our Belles and Beaus?  
Hence I, who lately bid adieu to pleasure,  
Robb'd of my spouse, and my dear virgin treasure;  
I, whom you saw despairing, breathe my last,  
Am free and easy, as if nought had past;  
Again put on my airs, and play my fan,  
And fear no more that dreadful creature, man.  
—But whence does this malicious mirth begin!—  
I know, ye beasts, you reckon it no sin.  
'Tis strange that crimes the same, in diff'rent plays,  
Should move our horror, and our laughter raise.  
Love's joy, secure the comic actor tries,  
But if he's ticked in blank verse, he dies.



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*The farce, where wives prove frail, still makes the best,  
And the poor cuckold is a standing jest :  
But our grave bard, a virtuous son of Isis,  
Counts a bold stroke in love among the vices ;  
In blood and wounds a guilty land he dips ye,  
And wastes an empire for one ravish'd gipsy.  
What musty morals fill an Oxford head,  
To notions of pedantic virtue bred !  
There each stiff Don, at gallantry exclaims,  
And calls fine Men and ladies, filthy names ;  
They tell you rakes and jilts corrupt a nation ;  
—Such is the prejudice of education !  
You, who know better things, will sure approve  
These scenes, that show the boundless power of love.  
Let, when they will, th' Italian things appear,  
This play, we trust, shall throng an audience here.  
Bold Myron's passion, up to frenzy wrought,  
Would ill be warbled through an eunuch's throat :  
His part, at least, his part requires a man ;  
Let Nicolini act it if he can.*

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7 JUL 52

